

Evaluation of Indiana Reading First Program

Interim Report

Year Five

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Executive Summary

The purpose of the full report is to present evaluation findings for 2007-08 (year five of the Reading First (RF) Evaluation). In the fifth year of the evaluation, data were collected to assess progress and fidelity in the implementation of the RF initiative as well as impact of the program on student achievement. This executive summary presents key findings from 2007-08. The body of this report is divided into four sections: *Commitment and Capacity of Key Stakeholders*, *Professional Development and Technical Assistance*, *Changes in the Classroom*, and *Findings on Impact*. The first section, *Commitment and Capacity of Key Stakeholders*, makes use of data gathered from surveys, site visits, and stakeholder interviews to examine the extent to which RF stakeholders understand and fulfill their roles in the RF initiative.

Commitment and Capacity of Key Stakeholders

This section examines the extent to which RF stakeholders understand and fulfill their roles in the RF initiative. In 2007-08, RF has continued its integration into many districts' administrative structures. Additional bureaucratic changes and adaptations in districts support and enable continued RF presence in school culture and daily practice. While there continues to be variation in the commitment of individual teachers, principals, coaches, and other stakeholders, RF is largely the norm, rather than a set of practices imposed from outside their school. In this section coaches, principals, teachers, and district level administrators are the primary source of data.

The Role of the Coach

Survey, site visit, and interview data collected in the evaluation to this point suggest that advances in coaching practice established in the earlier years of the grant are continuing to be maintained and deepened in 2007-08. The majority of coaches, in all cohorts, are successfully fulfilling their core coaching roles which include: observation and feedback on classroom practice, coaching sessions with teachers, conducting professional development, and coaching teachers and other stakeholders to delve into data. Though a percentage of coach time continues to be devoted to administrative tasks, as compared to earlier years, coaches are less consumed by these tasks. District level support continues to grow in most districts, enabling coaches to focus on teacher and student needs.

The Role of the Principal

As found in earlier years, principals are much more active in logistical and school-wide planning issues than they are in offering feedback on literacy instruction. As we saw in 2006-07, increasing numbers of principals are taking on a larger role in their school's literacy team. Over the five years of the RF grant there has been a considerable amount of turnover in principals in RF schools, but in many cases the turnover has actually been positive since it can bring renewed vitality and enthusiasm to a school. While the coach continues to be teachers' primary resource for classroom reading practice, principals are taking on added interest and involvement in the reading process in their schools. Although many principals are becoming quite active with respect to the reading pedagogy in their schools, there

continue to be some principals who have minimal communication with their coach and low visibility in their school's classrooms.

The Role of the Teacher

In 2007-08, the daily ninety minute reading block continued to be a component of RF that was implemented with integrity and fidelity. Teachers also reported administering assessments as scheduled, establishing flexible groups, relying on the core reading program and SBRR. Teachers, as well as other stakeholders report that teachers are becoming more comfortable interpreting and differentiating instruction based on assessment data. Resistance to flexible grouping and reading workstations continues to decrease and the increased comfort with SBRI and the use of data as a guide have increased teacher confidence.

Flexible group time and workstations seem to be implemented with the greatest amount of variation among teachers and schools. It continues to be difficult to establish the extent to which workstations are differentiated to meet student needs and the frequency with which groups are reorganized based on student skills. Teachers and other stakeholders state that this aspect of RF is being implemented with less fidelity than is desirable, but the majority of teachers acknowledge that this is an area in which they can continue to grow and become more competent in implementing.

The Role of the District and the Core Team

Data indicate that the involvement of district level personnel continued to increase in 2007-08. District Representatives tend to be veterans in their respective districts and their descriptions of the districts' role are extensive and detailed. Most commonly mentioned roles of the district were: maintenance of budgets; purchasing; facilitating communication and coordination to achieve overall educational goals; coordination of professional development; hiring and managing personnel to meet needs. While the overall trend among RF districts is toward an increasing level of district commitment, some RF schools continue to report a lack of support from their district.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

In Indiana's RF initiative, there are two main sources of professional development and technical assistance: the Indiana Department of Education and RF districts. As found in earlier years, stakeholders report that they are taking advantage of professional development opportunities. Next, there are mixed responses on the usefulness of professional development offerings. It was found in the on-line survey and during site visit interviews, those professional development activities that were mentioned by some stakeholders as very useful were also mentioned as not useful by others. The greatest division of opinion is on state-level meetings, summer academies, and Voyager. However, as compared to earlier years, stakeholders indicate that these PD options are changing to meet their needs. Focused, tailored PD continues to be greatly valued by most stakeholders. Overall, while individual

stakeholders are critical of specific PD activities, they note that PD overall has been critical for their development.

Changes in the Classroom

This section examines the changes that have occurred in RF classrooms since the beginning of implementation. Data were gathered and analyzed concerning the level and quality of implementation of: the ninety minute reading block and SBRR, assessment and assessment as a guide for instruction, flexible grouping and reading workstations, and interventionists and the role of the interventionist. Summaries of findings for each component are presented below.

Ninety Minute Reading Block and SBRR

Similar to previous years, the vast majority of stakeholders agree that the ninety minute reading block is observed every day. Administrators in new and veteran schools have made ninety minutes of reading a mandatory part of their schedules. As compared to earlier years, daily observation and faithful implementation of SBRI during the ninety minute reading block has improved. Most teachers are more aware of appropriate SBRR strategies and techniques to use during the ninety minute block. In cohort three schools, implementation of SBRI is at varying levels, but there is an effort to increase the fidelity of implementation in these schools.

Assessment and Assessment as Guide for Instruction

Compared to previous years, use of assessment as a guide for instruction is more focused and nuanced. In surveys, stakeholders report that teachers frequently administer assessments, use them to guide instruction, change their instructional plans based on assessment results, and use assessments to identify students who can benefit from interventions. In site visit interviews, teachers spoke fluently and enthusiastically about specific classroom strategies that were guided by assessment data. They report using data to guide identification of students for small group instruction or intervention groups. Many reported using data to help determine what activities to use during the 90 minute block workstations.

Flexible Grouping and Reading Workstations

Compared to previous years, use of flexible grouping and reading workstations has increased. In surveys, the vast majority of stakeholders report that teachers use flexible grouping and reading workstations frequently. As compared to previous years, resistance to flexible grouping and reading workstations has decreased. Many stakeholders reported seeing benefits of using this flexible, data-driven instruction. However, while nearly all teachers report implementing flexible group time and workstations, it is difficult to establish the extent to which workstations are differentiated to meet student needs and the frequency with which groups are reorganized based on student skill.

Interventions and the Role of the Interventionist

Interventionists and other teachers who responded to their RF survey most frequently described their job titles as: RF interventionists or assistants, special education teachers, and Title I teachers. The presence of intervention personnel with RF in their job title indicates administrative support for interventions has continued in 2007-08 and districts and schools continue to acquire personnel to better serve students' intervention needs.

Communication and collaboration between interventionists and K-3 teachers continues to improve from earlier years. The majority of interventionists report frequent discussion with teachers about student needs and collaboration to identify students who need interventions. Site visit interviews and observations indicate that in 2007-08 more interventions are being conducted more frequently with more appropriate students. Overall, district and school personnel continue to become more knowledgeable about the 3-Tier model and assessment data and have made more of the changes necessary to offer interventions for strategic and intensive students.

Culture and Collaboration

Research on implementation of major school reform indicates that school culture and communication play large roles in the success of reform efforts. Overall, in Indiana RF schools, communication and professionalism amongst RF stakeholders continues to improve and in many schools, it has been integrated into daily practice.

In 2007-08, the level and complexity of communication among stakeholders remained strong in most schools. In site visits, stakeholders expressed increased confidence in their own professional knowledge, enthusiasm in student progress, and reliance on communication with their colleagues. Overall perceptions of RF continue to vary among groups of stakeholders and individuals. However, in 2007-08, there continues to be a decline in the number of stakeholders who are highly negative about RF and more who are positive. While there continues to be considerable variation in stakeholder reaction to the achievability of RF requirements, in 2007-08, there is more agreement among stakeholders and a stronger perception that RF is having a positive impact on students.

Successes

As compared to the initial years of RF implementation, there are more success stories and more stakeholders have stories to tell. As has been found in the past few years, stakeholders are most likely to report continued growth in student and teacher development. Closely related to these student successes are teacher reports of their success in assessing student needs and meeting those needs with varied SBRI strategies. Successes that were more notable in 2007-08 than previous years are those in professional development, success in tailoring instruction to student needs, and excellence in leadership.

Challenges

While reports of success have increased from the early years of implementation, all involved in RF know that challenges still exist. However, as compared the early years of

implementation, stakeholders report that the severity of challenges and the level of strain have decreased. Challenges present in previous years which were again highlighted in 2007-08 include lack of time, staff buy-in, and communication. These challenges continue in all schools for all stakeholders; buy-in continues to be a challenge for a minority of stakeholders in each school.

Findings on Impact

This section examines stakeholder perceptions of RF impact on students, teachers, upper elementary classes, and non RF schools. Additionally, initial perceptions of preparation for sustainability are examined. These perceptions of impact, especially of RF on teacher skill and knowledge and student performance were positive overall. Impact on student performance as assessed through the ISTEP+, DIBELS, and Terra Nova Cat are presented in graphical format

Stakeholder Perception of Teacher and Student Impact

As was found in previous years, perceptions of the impact of RF on teacher knowledge and skill continue to be very positive. The vast majority of teachers, principals and coaches report that teachers have seen an increase in their skills or have changed their practice in all areas of implementation. Teachers report that knowledge of DIBELS was the area in which they had most improved. Other areas of high improvement were: knowledge of reading interventions, practice related to assessment, and practice related to interventions. Additionally, the vast majority of stakeholders report positive change in all areas of student skill, including student skills and test scores.

Impact on DIBELS, TN and ISTEP

As has been found in previous years, the impact of RF on vocabulary and comprehension outcomes has been mixed, both in the overall student population as well as student subgroups. It is important to remember that the changes observed do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Note: DIBELS ORF is not designed as an outcome measure. Because of this, these findings are most useful when viewed for general information on trends as opposed to outcomes assessments of reading success.

Impact on Upper Elementary Teachers and non-Reading First Schools

The vast majority of coaches and principals reported that non-RF schools and upper elementary teachers have been invited to RF PD activities. Nearly half of all stakeholders agree or strongly agree that non-RF teachers in their district are using RF. As compared to previous years, stakeholders reported that extending shared literacy practice to whole schools and districts is a higher priority. District representatives and principals frequently mentioned whole-school and whole-district meetings with discussions of coordinated SBRR PD and sharing of RF practice for all schools. Additionally, stakeholders report that Non-RF schools

and upper grade teachers in RF schools have begun to use DIBELS and a 90 minute block.

Sustainability

In surveys the vast majority of all stakeholders reported that their school is on track to sustainability; however, findings from site visit interviews presented a slightly different assessment. While interviews indicate the few stakeholders are optimistic about sustainability, as compared to previous years, there has been considerable preparation for the future. Stakeholders are aware of the importance of continued district and administrative support, coaching, PD, and buy-in. In addition, the majority of teachers stated that they would continue to use RF components such as the ninety minute reading block, flexible grouping, and interventions in their classrooms with or without continued funding.

Future Directions for the Reading First Evaluation

The Reading First Evaluation will continue until 2009. Data collection and analysis will continue to assess the overall quality and integrity of implementation of RF in classrooms as well as the effectiveness of professional development and the impact of RF on student achievement.

Introduction

Indiana's Reading First (RF) program was established in 2003 as a result of a grant from the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE). The purpose of the program is to improve student reading achievement. The program accomplishes this by providing support to districts and teachers to increase their knowledge and use of scientifically based reading research (SBRR).

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) has contracted with the Center for Evaluation & Education Policy (CEEP) at Indiana University to conduct the evaluation of the RF program. The evaluation encompasses the time period from October 2003 to October 2009. This report presents evaluation data on the implementation and impact of RF in its fifth year (2007-08), as well as a summary of key evaluation findings from years one through four.

Background of the National Reading First Program

Reading First is a federal initiative focused on providing effective and meaningful support to states, districts, and schools to help all students become successful, fluent readers by the end of third grade. Reading First is authorized by Title I, Part B, Subpart I of the *Elementary and Secondary Act*, as amended by the *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001. As the academic cornerstone of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, the purpose of RF is to improve student reading achievement through the implementation of programs and strategies proven to be effective by SBRR.

There is a strong commitment to the RF program nationally. Since 2002, Congress has appropriated over five billion dollars for the Reading First program. While RF is a nationwide program, the USDOE does not directly administer the program. First, RF grants are awarded by the USDOE to state educational agencies (SEAs). SEAs can receive, after a grant approval process, a six-year grant. From that grant, SEAs award sub-grants to local educational agencies (LEAs) on the basis of a competitive grant process.

Unlike previous national reading programs, RF is a classroom-based initiative that establishes clear, specific expectations for what can and should happen for all students. The RF initiative specifies that teachers' classroom instruction decisions be informed by SBRR and the on-going assessment of students. To ensure that students learn to read well, high-quality reading programs must include effective instruction in the key components of reading instruction including: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

The assessment of students is used to assist teachers in determining each student's specific reading needs in all components of reading in order to plan instruction and use time more effectively. Data from assessments can also help administrators manage the instructional resources in their schools more effectively and help reading coaches provide better support to their teachers.

Guidelines on the required components of each LEA's RF program were established by the USDOE. From the "Guidance for the Reading First Program" provided by the USDOE, an effective reading program:

- Is based on scientifically based research.
- Includes instructional content based on the five components of reading instruction.
- Integrates the five components of reading instruction into a coherent instructional design.
- Has a coherent instructional design which includes explicit instructional strategies.
- Has explicit instructional strategies that address students' specific strengths and weaknesses; coordinated instructional sequences; ample practice opportunities; aligned student materials; and may include the use of targeted, scientifically based instructional sequences.
- Is designed with consideration for time allotment, including a protected, uninterrupted block of time for reading instruction of more than 90 minutes per day.

State Educational Agencies (including IDOE) were instructed to ensure that awarded RF grants are given to LEAs demonstrating that they would carry out the following activities:

- Use of valid and reliable instructional reading assessments for student assessment and decision making.
- Selection and implementation of a reading program that is integrated with state standards and based in SBRR and the five essential components of reading instruction.
- Use of instructional materials based on SBRR.
- Provision and ongoing evaluation of professional development for K-3 teachers and special education teachers which prepares these teachers in the use of instructional materials and SBRR.
- Collection and use of valid and reliable evaluation data by schools and districts.
- Reporting of student data for all students and categories of students.
- Promotion of access to reading material (U.S. Department of Education, 2002; U.S. Department of Education, 2005).

Background of the Indiana Reading First Program

The IDOE was awarded its initial RF grant in 2003. The initial and subsequent grants enable the provision of state-wide professional development and technical assistance; however, the majority of the funds are awarded to eligible LEAs to establish evidence-based reading programs in schools where a large percentage of K-3 students were not "on track" to be good readers by the end of third grade.

In 2003, IDOE awarded RF grants to 21 school districts to fund programs at 53 schools across Indiana. In 2005, a second funding round was completed; two districts and five additional schools were awarded RF funds. In 2006, a third funding round was completed. Seventeen additional schools from previously participating districts had their first year of RF implementation in 2006-2007. Additionally, due to extensive reorganization in a large urban

district, two schools are no longer RF recipients. Funding priority was given to districts that demonstrated a clear need, as well as a commitment from administrators, specialists, and teachers to implement the RF grant.

School districts are eligible to apply for a RF grant if they have 35% or more of K-3 students reading below grade level based on the third grade Indiana Statewide Testing of Educational Progress Plus (ISTEP+), in addition to having jurisdiction over at least one of the following:

- a) A geographic area that includes an empowerment zone or enterprise community.
- b) A significant percentage of schools identified for Title I school improvement.
- c) The highest percentages of students who are counted for allocations under Title I, Part A.

The State of Indiana identified the following five goals for RF in K-3 classrooms:

- Ensure that K-3 teachers, including special education teachers, learn about instruction and other activities based on scientifically based reading research (SBRR) and have the skills needed to teach reading effectively (Goal 1);
- Assist districts and schools in identifying instructional materials, programs, strategies, and approaches based on scientifically based research and aligned to the Indiana Academic Standards (Goal 2);
- Ensure that all programs, strategies, and activities proposed and implemented in K-3 classrooms meet the criteria for scientifically based reading research (Goal 3);
- Assist districts and schools in the selection and administration of screening, diagnostic, and classroom based instructional reading assessment with proven reliability and validity, in order to measure where students are and monitor their progress (Goal 4); and
- Integrate initiatives and leverage resources to avoid duplication of programs and services (Goal 5).

Reading First sub-grants are intended to provide necessary assistance to districts to establish evidence-based reading programs for students in K-3. In its proposal for RF funds to the USDOE, IDOE established its guidelines for LEA proposals. First, Indiana RF funds are to provide for a dedicated reading coach for each school. The coach receives intensive training in SBRR and aids teachers in implementation of this knowledge in the classroom.

In Indiana RF classrooms, student progress in reading achievement is regularly assessed. Formative assessment (screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessment) is provided by the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and summative assessment by the Terra-Nova Cat and ISTEP+. The exclusive use of these assessments was a change from the assessment plan set out by IDOE in its USDOE proposal. At the end of the first year of implementation, it was decided by IDOE that the use of DIBELS for screening, progress monitoring, and diagnostic assessment was preferable to the multiple assessments originally proposed.

Background of the Indiana Reading First Implementation

During the 2003-04 school year, RF program staff focused on implementation issues including school-level professional development that aligned reading programs, research, and Indiana's Academic Standards; helping schools to develop efficient and appropriate assessment systems to inform instruction and identify students who need additional assistance; providing assistance in the form of regional consultants and regional coaches to assist with program implementation; and supporting coaches and teachers who were beginning to use instructional strategies that are based on reading research.

During the 2004-05 school year, RF program staff continued to work with schools on basic implementation issues and provide assistance in professional development, technical assistance, and regional coaching; however, the focus shifted to ensuring the proper administration of DIBELS assessments in classrooms, teacher and coach use of assessment data to guide classroom practice, consistent use of the core reading program, and flexible grouping within the 90 minute reading block. In addition, the groundwork was laid for schools to begin using differentiated workstations as part of their systematic instruction.

During the 2006-07 school year, RF program staff assisted school districts in their progress towards consistent administration and reporting of assessment data; teacher, coach, and administrator knowledge and use of assessment data to guide classroom practice and decision-making; maintenance of the uninterrupted 90 minute reading block; and differentiated and systematic instruction to ensure that all students reach their reading goals. Because of the extensive number of new schools that had been awarded funds between 2005 and 2006, RF staff differentiated their assistance to aid not only fourth year grantees to meet these goals, but also to enable first and second year schools to progress quickly towards the level of their more experienced RF peers.

With no new schools added in the 2007-08 program year, RF program staff were able to focus their work with school districts on improving fidelity of implementation of RF. Additionally, 2007 was the year for new reading textbook adoption in Indiana's Elementary schools therefore teachers, coaches and other RF staff spent considerable effort in learning their new core reading programs and incorporating these changes into their teaching.

Scope of the Evaluation

The Indiana Department of Education contracted with the Center for Evaluation and Education Policy (CEEP) to evaluate the implementation and outcomes of RF. This evaluation provides policy makers within the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and other stakeholders with information to improve the implementation and impact of the initiative. The evaluation has six primary questions which guide overall data collection and analysis and under-gird the formulation of more focused, flexible questions that lead data collection and analysis each year.

The six primary evaluation questions are:

1. To what extent do RF schools implement the five essential reading components?
2. To what extent do RF classrooms implement specific instructional strategies such as the 90 minute block, progress monitoring, etc?

3. What types of reading instruction strategies are consistently applied in all K-3 classrooms?
4. What types of professional development (PD) activities do the district and the school support?
5. How well does the district and school supported PD provide for consistent, high-quality classroom instruction?
6. What types of technical assistance are provided to the schools by the district? How effective is it?

The first year of the evaluation focused on addressing questions 1, 2, and 6. The year-one evaluation examined questions related to implementation and state-level activities, focusing on the following: the extent to which RF schools implemented the five essential components of reading (i.e., phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension); the extent to which RF schools implemented appropriate instructional strategies (e.g., explicit instruction, 90 minute uninterrupted reading block, small flexible grouping, etc.); and the extent to which RF schools developed an assessment system. State-level activities (e.g., the role of RF leadership, description of professional development activities) were also described.

The comprehensive overview of findings from year one is available in “Evaluation of Indiana Reading First: Year 1 Report.” However, an abbreviated summary of findings is noted here to provide a better context for interpreting the current results. In addressing the question: “What was the level of success of the first year of implementation in RF schools?”, the following was found:

At the end of the year the majority of schools had successfully begun to implement their RF plans.

- Schools were using a 90 minute uninterrupted block.
- Staff were increasingly administering assessments.
- Teachers were using the five components of reading in their instruction.
- Reading instruction was increasingly individualized to meet students’ needs.

Factors identified as critical to success included:

- Strong coach with content knowledge.
- Strong coach with interpersonal skills.
- Collaboration and communication among staff.
- Climate conducive to change (support, trust, etc.).
- High-quality professional development.

Based on the shifting focus of RF during the second year of implementation, and the evolving nature of the evaluation, the second year of the evaluation expanded the scope of the evaluation to begin to assess the impact of RF as well as continue to examine progress in implementation. Key questions concerning implementation for the second year evaluation included:

- Coaches: To what extent are coaches being effectively used in schools? How are coaches spending their time? What is the role of the coach in the classroom?
- Core Teams: To what extent are Core Teams being effectively used in schools? To what extent can the successful implementation of RF be attributed to Core Teams?
- Changes in the classroom: To what extent are classroom instructional strategies guided by assessment results? To what extent are SBRR strategies being used in the classroom? How are the 90 minutes being used? Is flexible grouping being used in addition to the core reading program?
- Interventions: To what extent are diagnostics and appropriate interventions being used in the classroom? What types of interventions are being used?
- Professional Development: Are professional development choices being guided by classroom practice needs?
- Non-RF schools: To what extent has RF had an impact on non-participating schools in RF districts? To what extent are teachers at non-RF schools participating in PD, changing practices, etc.?

Key findings from the 2004-05 evaluation were:

Coaches

- Coaches spent less time in administrative duties than in 2003-04
- Administrative duties continued to occupy a large percent of coach time
- Coaches struggled to offer coaching to teachers without being seen as an evaluator
- One-third of coaches had coaching sessions only once or twice a month

Principals and District-level CORE Team

- Principals observed classrooms much more often than they offered feedback on observations
- Principals were seen as monitors of RF implementation
- Some coaches reported infrequent communication with their principal
- Stakeholders reported participation on the CORE team or other district meetings
- Role of the CORE team and/or district was not always clear

Professional Development

- Stakeholders who were enthusiastic about Voyager often reported that the Coach supplemented the on-line materials
- Stakeholders took advantage of professional development opportunities
- Some stakeholders reported that professional development was not coordinated with local needs

Classroom Practice

- The vast majority of stakeholders agreed that the 90 minute reading block was in place
- Daily observation of the block and implementation of SBRR during the 90 minutes continued to be a challenge
- Assessment and its use in instruction were not as fully implemented as the 90 minute block
- Stakeholders were positive about assessments and confident in their growing knowledge of them
- Flexible grouping and reading workstations were in the early stages of implementation in most classrooms
- Special education teachers, Title 1 teachers, and ESL teachers were frequently interventionists
- The most common activity for interventionists was conducting interventions with intensive students

Culture and Initial Reports of Success

- Communication among RF stakeholders was improving
- Stakeholders who may not have been central to instruction in the past were being included
- Overall perceptions of RF on culture were mixed
- Most stakeholders agreed that RF meets teacher and student needs in their school but a minority strongly disagreed (especially teachers)
- There were many reports of success, especially for students

Key findings from the 2005-06 evaluation were:

Coaches

- Percent of coach time spent in administrative duties continued to decline
- Observation and modeling in classrooms, coaching sessions, and data discussions had increased
- Agreement on the usefulness and availability of coaches increased from 2004-05
- In many schools, especially in cohort one, as teachers' knowledge and skills grew, coaches became trusted advisors

Principals and District-level CORE Team

- Principals continued to observe classrooms much more often than they offered feedback on observations
- Principals were seen as monitors and leaders of RF implementation
- Principal monitoring of data had increased from 2004-05
- While most coaches reported frequent contact with the principal, some reported only a few meetings a year

- As stated by District Contacts, the role of the district was clearer and more extensive than in 2004-05
- District-level team meetings that were considered effective by school-level stakeholders offered a forum for discussion of needs, overall goals, and progress

Professional Development

- Stakeholders continued to take advantage of PD opportunities
- As compared to 2004-05, many more stakeholders agreed that PD met their needs
- Stakeholders reported that attention to data and discussion of goals improved the coordination of PD with needs

Classroom Practice

- The vast majority of stakeholders agreed that the 90 minute reading block was in place
- As compared to 2004-05, in cohort one schools, daily observation of the block and implementation of SBRR during the 90 minutes had improved
- Stakeholders' knowledge of assessments had grown from that of 2004-05
- Overall, stakeholders were positive about their ability to administer assessments
- In many schools, coaches, technical assistance providers, and other stakeholders were providing intensive PD to increase knowledge and skills for the interpretation of assessment data
- As compared to 2004-05, flexible grouping and reading workstations were more widely implemented
- Teachers that had overcome resistance were observed to have stronger classroom management skills, additional support in the classroom, and greater knowledge of how data drives instructional strategies
- There was greater stakeholder knowledge of the 3-Tier model and interventions
- More identified students were receiving interventions more frequently
- Personnel dedicated to RF interventions had been hired in many schools
- Some schools administered interventions in the home classroom and some had created complex pull-out schedules

Culture and Initial Reports of Success

- Communication among RF stakeholders continued to improve
- Stakeholders who may not have been central to instruction in the past were being included and the number of stakeholders involved was increasing
- Overall perceptions of RF on culture were mixed
- Most stakeholders agreed that RF met teacher and student needs in their school but a minority strongly disagreed (especially teachers)
- There were many reports of success, especially for students

Initial Feedback on Sustainability

- The vast majority of stakeholders agreed or strongly agreed that they were on track to sustainability
- Many teachers stated that they would continue their current practice with or without RF funds
- Stakeholders listed the continued presence of a coach and professional development as necessary for sustainability
- Data suggested that some stakeholders had made little preparation for sustainability

Key findings from the 2006-07 evaluation were:

Coaches

- Coaches spent less time dealing with administrative issues than they had in previous years
- The vast majority of coaches model or observe in teachers' classrooms, meet one-on-one with teachers, and manage/analyze data
- The percentage of coach time used in conducting interventions continued to fall

Principals and District -level CORE Team

- Teachers reported that principals are becoming more involved in the reading process in their schools
- Principals have become more conversant in assessment data and often attend grade level meetings and professional development opportunities
- Principals are seen as strong leaders for RF in their schools, monitor teacher implementation and participate in district leadership team meetings
- Principal participation in managing the RF budget has shifted

Professional Development

- The vast majority of teachers participate in PD opportunities at least once a month
- Nearly three quarters of teachers and interventionists continued to agree or strongly agree that the PD opportunities met their needs
- Coaches were most likely to report the Voyager PD was most useful to them, whereas teachers and interventionists were most likely to report the summer academies as the most useful PD opportunity for them

Classroom Practice

- The majority of all stakeholders agree or strongly agree that the majority of teachers in their school effectively use SBRR strategies, that the 90 minute block is being implemented consistently
- A growing number of teachers agree or strongly that teachers are using data to guide their instruction

- More stakeholders are better able to speak clearly about classroom practice
- There is wide variation in the quality of flexible group time

Culture and Initial Reports of Success

- Stakeholders in continue to offer encouraging comments about the way RF has encouraged collaboration and promoted a positive school culture
- Stakeholders feel that explicitness of instruction under RF is one reason for the student success they have seen
- While cohort three teachers felt that the first year of implementation is stressful, teachers in the other two cohorts reported that the school culture and communication has continued to improve

Initial Feedback on Sustainability

- The vast majority of stakeholders felt that they are on track to sustainability at their school
- Teachers have reported that they plan on continuing the practices that have been introduced with RF
- Maintenance of the coach was seen as the most critical component needed for sustaining the program in their school across all stakeholders

Methodology

In order to effectively answer the evaluation questions, comprehensive qualitative and quantitative methodology was employed, including, telephone interviews with district representatives, site visits to RF schools, and web-based surveys with stakeholders. Analyses of impact will include other extant data such as ISTEP+ scores for RF school students as well as DIBELS and Terra-Nova data. Sources of data and methodology used for the findings in this report are described in the sections below.

Interviews with district representatives

Telephone interviews were conducted with all district RF representatives in March of 2008. The purpose of these interviews was to determine basic demographic and job description information for RF district representatives; what the role of district representative entails and the scope of the districts' role in the implementation of RF; fidelity of implementation of the 90 minute reading block; and use of assessments, flexible grouping, and interventions. In addition, RF district representatives were asked for their perceptions of the impact of RF on upper-elementary teachers in RF; the impact of RF on schools in their district without RF grants; their involvement in budget administration; preparation for sustainability; and impressions of initial successes and challenges.

Site visits

Fourteen, one day site visits were conducted in late April and early May of 2008. Site visits were conducted by teams of trained CEEP staff. Each visit included interviews with principals, coaches, teachers, interventionists, and other school staff.

These fourteen RF schools were selected in collaboration with IDOE to represent a range of characteristics. The sites were a mixture of the three cohorts, urban and rural demographics, and northern, southern, and central geographical distribution. In addition, a sample of schools that had been visited by CEEP in years one through four was re-visited. Other schools had never been visited, including some schools that were in their second year of implementation. Provided below is a general overview of the types of schools visited, of the fourteen schools:

- Six of those schools had not previously been visited by CEEP for evaluation.
- Eight had been visited in at least one of the previous four rounds of site visits.
- Seven were in northern Indiana.
- One was in southern Indiana.
- Six were in central Indiana.
- Eight were in an urban setting.
- Six were in a rural setting.

Each visit included:

- Interviews with principals, Reading First coaches, K-3 and intervention teachers, and other school staff;
- Observations of relevant meetings and events such as collaborative planning periods, tutoring sessions, and literacy team meetings.

All observations and interviews were semi-structured and guided by interview protocols that focused on questions concerning: the role, responsibilities, and effectiveness of the coach, principal, teachers, and interventionists; the composition and effectiveness of the school and district leadership; the role and effectiveness of the principal; use of assessments to lead classroom practice; use of progress monitoring and interventions; use of the reading core and flexible groups; the availability and effectiveness of professional development; and the extent to which they and their school are implementing RF with high quality and fidelity.

Principal, Coach, Interventionist, and Teacher Surveys

All coaches, principals, K-3 teachers, and interventionists at all RF schools received a web-based survey in late April/early May of 2008. Four surveys were developed with questions tailored to the roles of each group of stakeholders. Questions addressed the demographic background and participation in professional development of all respondents. Questions specific to each stakeholder group were also included as noted below.

Teacher...

use of assessments in classroom practice.
implementation of the 90 minute block, reading workstations, and flexible grouping.
participation in professional development and collaboration.

Principal...

observations and feedback on classroom practice.
awareness and use of assessment data.
communication and leadership related to RF.
involvement in the timely expenditure of RF funds.

Coach...

practice in modeling, observing, data analysis, and coaching.
administration of assessments and/or interventions.
leadership of professional development.
participation in professional development.
communication with other stakeholders and the Core Team use of time.
skills and effectiveness in terms of SBRR.
involvement in the timely expenditure of RF funds.

Interventionist ...

job title.
use of assessments in classroom practice.
collaboration with K-3 teachers and coach.
administration of interventions.

All stakeholders were asked for their perceptions of RF impact on...

teacher knowledge, skills, and practices.
student performance.
school climate.
assessment of readiness for sustainability.

Survey Response Rates

Emails for all RF coaches were acquired from IDOE. Coaches were asked to provide email addresses for principals, teachers and interventionists/aides who had email addresses. When not all staff had school email addresses, coaches were asked to forward the appropriate survey to them. In total, 66 surveys were sent to coaches and 76 surveys were sent to principals and assistant principals. Additionally, surveys were sent directly, or were provided for distribution, to approximately 809 K-3 Teachers and 259 interventionists/aides. Standard protocol such as repeated follow-ups/reminders and multiple methods of contact were used to ensure the highest possible response rates. Response rates are as follows:

85% (56) of coaches
59% (45) of principals
22% (181) of K-3 teachers, and
32% (82) of interventionists

Most principals and coaches and nearly a third of the interventionists submitted surveys. However, the percentage of teachers submitting surveys is less than 25%. While the percentage of teachers and interventionists who have completed the survey is lower than in previous years, the decline in the percentage of teachers who have completed the survey has declined over each of the past two years.

To provide a general understanding of the populations responding to the surveys, the following provides some basic demographic and background characteristics for each stakeholder group:

Principals

Forty-five principals responded to the principal survey. The gender composition of RF principals was nearly the same as previous years with 60% of principal respondents being female and 40% male. The vast majority of RF principals indicate their ethnic background as white (87%), 13% as African American. This is similar to previous years.

Overall RF principals report similar educational attainment levels as they did in earlier years. Nearly all principals have a Master's, Master's +, or Ed.S. Forty-one principals (91%) have received a Master's degree or Master's +, and two principals (4%) have an Ed.S.

The majority of principal respondents (60%) had been in their current position for five years or less, as was the case in earlier years. In the current year, five (11%) had been in their position for less than one year; 19 (43%) had been in their current position for two to five years; fourteen (32%) had been in their position for six to ten years; and six (14%) had been in their current position for over 11 years. All of these categories changed very little from previous years.

Similar to previous evaluation findings, while many principals are relatively new to their current position, they are veteran educators. Twenty-one (47%) respondents have more than 20 years of experience as an educator; 19 (42%) have 11-20 years of experience; and five (11%) have six to ten years of experience.

Coaches

Fifty-six coaches responded to the coach survey. With very similar numbers to previous year's surveys, 96% of respondents are female and 87% are white.

Forty-four (81%) coaches have their Master's degree or Master's + and nine (17%) have their BA/BS. These percentages are similar to last year's educational attainment self-reports.

Two coaches report having been teachers for two to five years; the majority has been teaching for more than 20 years. Nine (17%) have been teaching for six to ten years; and 13 (24%) have been teaching for 11-20 years.

K-3 Teachers

A total of 181 K-3 teachers responded to the teacher survey. The percentage of respondents from each grade level was almost completely equal with the sample being comprised of 27% Kindergarten teachers and 23% first, 23% second, and 23% third grade teachers (4% of teachers indicated that they taught in a multi age group).

Similar to findings in earlier years, 94% of respondents are female and the group is 91% white. The majority of teachers either have obtained their Bachelor's degree (99 or 56%) or their Master's degree (78 or 44%). These educational attainments are similar to those of earlier years.

Overall teacher experience is less than it has been in previous years. 25% (44) of respondents have taught for one year or less; 35% (61) have taught for two to five years, 20% (35) have taught for six to ten years; 11% (20) have taught for 11-20 years; and 10% (18) have taught for over 20 years.

Interventionists

A total of 81 interventionists responded to their survey. The RF staff who are involved in the initiative but are not K-3 classroom teachers are a varied group. Most respondents are RF interventionists or assistants, special education teachers, and many are Title 1 teachers. Some respondents are ESL teachers, and a few are resource teachers. Those who did not fit into any of these categories reported that they are: Speech Pathologist, Title 1 Parent Coordinator, and ESL Assistant. The overall breakdown follows:

- 43 Reading First interventionists or assistants
- 33 are Title 1 teachers
- 7 are special education teachers
- 6 are ESL/ELL/ENL teachers
- 1 is a resource teacher
- 5 indicated other roles

As compared to the findings from last year, the trend of hiring of interventionist staff members specific to the RF initiative continues to remain strong. This year over half of the interventionists stated that they specifically are considered RF staff. This is the second year in a row with over 50% of intervention staff indicating that they are specifically tied to the RF program. These findings are in contrast to earlier years when less than a third of the interventionists identified themselves as RF interventionists.

As a group, the characteristics of these interventionists:

Respondents are 96% female and 79% white. These percentages are similar to those in the 2006-07, sample but overall they represent a group of instructors who have gotten more

diverse over the course of the RF grant. Responses indicate that the number of non-white interventionists has increased 16%. As compared to 2006-07, a smaller proportion of interventionists have obtained a Master's or Bachelor's degree. In 2007-08, 44% (32) of respondents indicated that they had obtained a Bachelor's degree and 36% (26) of respondents indicated that they had obtained a Master's degree or higher. In the 2006-07 survey, 47% indicated that they had a Bachelor's degree and 41% had obtained a Master's degree or higher. This shift in the educational attainment of Interventionists has been observed in the data since the 2005-06 survey.

The majority of interventionists are in their first or first five years in their position. Thirty percent (24) have been in the position for less than one year; 48% (38) have been in their current position from two to five years; and 23% (18) of respondents have been in their current position for six years or longer. Of these, nine percent (7) have served for six to ten years; eight percent (6) for 11-20 years, and six percent (5) for 20+ years.

In 2007-08, 25% (20) of respondents have been a teacher for over 20 years; 23% (18) for 11-20 years; 20% (16) for six to ten years; 24% (19) for two to five years; and eight percent (6) for less than one year. The experience of these interventionists is similar to the experience of the interventionists surveyed in 2006-07.

The Role of the Coach

“The reading coach has been an incredible asset and help to me, a first year teacher. She helped me tremendously in setting up my reading program, including the use of data in driving instruction, finding appropriate activities to use with the students during literacy stations, and so many other ways!”

-- Teacher

“I tailor my coaching to the needs of the teachers. With grades K-3, I get into each of the classes at least once a week. I am usually able to have one-on-one planning time, and then I usually have a second meeting (with the classroom teacher) to discuss my observations, modeling, or co-teaching. We meet once a month with each grade level team. ...I would say that 60% of my day is devoted to the teachers in their classes, coaching, and data meetings... Analyzing the data has gotten better and the focus of how to interpret the data to inform and guide instruction for teachers has gotten better.”

-- Coach

The Reading First (RF) Coach is continually cited by school staff as a critical factor in the implementation of RF. The Reading Coach must balance the multifaceted dimensions of the job. Given the varied responsibilities, each coach must be flexible and willing to provide different levels of assistance and support to a variety of school personnel with differing levels of comfort and familiarity of the components of RF.

Summaries of key components of the coaches' roles from RF documents and presentations are presented in the table below. Data on the capacity of coaches in each of these areas has been collected by multiple methods. Table 1 shows the areas addressed by each major data collection strategy.

Table 1. Relation of Component of Coach's Role to Data Collection Method

Components of Coach Role	On-line Surveys	Site Visit Observations and Interviews	District Representative Interviews
Share expertise on assessment instruments; reading programs; and research-based strategies, practices, and interventions	*	*	
Collaborate with teachers and principal to interpret data and review data and program progress	*	*	
Assist teachers to prepare instruction and interventions; demonstrate and co-teach lessons; observe classrooms	*	*	
Support teachers to become independent practitioners of SBRR		*	

•Based on the presentation “Key Areas of Grant-Based Monitoring” made at an Administrator’s Meeting on April 21, 2004 and the draft version of Reading First Coaching Guide: Leading for Reading Success presented by the Central Region Reading First Technical Assistance Center on October 22, 2004

Results related to these multiple components of the coaches' role are presented in two primary sections: Time Use and Effectiveness in Collaboration. In the Time Use section, data from multiple sources are presented to provide a better understanding of the ways in which RF coaches are using their time. The main questions in this section are:

- What are coaches doing?
- How often are they doing it?

The Effectiveness in Collaboration section focuses on the ways in which RF coaches are facilitating teacher learning through effective collaboration. The main questions for this section are:

- Are coaches confident in their skills and their value to teachers?
- Do teachers and principals benefit from the skills of the coaches?

Coach time use and effectiveness in collaboration are assessed through coach, K-3 teacher, interventionist, and principal responses. In the Time Use section, observation and feedback from coaches is presented first, followed by data from on-line surveys. First, coaches estimated what percent of their time was spent in RF-related activities; next, stakeholder assessments of coach time use are presented. Finally, observations and insights from site visit interviews are reported.

Time Use

In the Year 1 report (2003-04), coaches' time allocation was noted as a serious concern. The percentage of coach time spent in administrative tasks (e.g. ordering supplies or filling out paperwork) decreased in Year 2 though coaches continued to report that administrative duties competed with time available for coaching sessions, professional development, and modeling. While all coaches continued to spend time in administrative duties in Year 3, for the first time coaches were spending the majority of their time working with teachers, either by modeling lessons, being in the classrooms for observation, or by meeting with teachers one-on-one. In the 2006-07 school year, most coaches effectively managed their schedules and devoted the majority of their time to classrooms and coaching sessions; it is notable that cohort 2 and 3 coaches were also able to allocate most of their time to these core coaching activities.

The data collected this year show that coaches continue to successfully balance the multiple demands on their time by focusing the majority of their time on meeting with teachers, observing and modeling instruction, and reviewing student data while also engaging in more of the administrative duties such as working on the budget and planning professional development or other meetings. This type of time management ensures that the majority of their time is spent in activities that are likely to insure that the RF program is being implemented with quality and fidelity.

On-line Surveys

In on-line surveys, coaches were asked to report the percent of their time spent in modeling/observing in classrooms; one-on-one coaching sessions; conducting assessments; managing/analyzing data; conducting interventions; technical/administrative duties; information/materials for teachers; RF housekeeping; and other activities in a typical week. Responses are presented in Table 2. See Appendix A for a copy of the complete coach survey.

Table 2. Percent Coach Time Spent in Coaching Activities

Coaching Activities (N = 55)	Percent of Coaches Who Spent at Least Some Time in These Activities	Range of Percent Time Spent in Activity	Mean Percent Time Spent in Activity
Modeling or observing in a teachers' classroom	98%	0-75%	30%
Meeting one-on-one with teachers	98%	0-40%	17%
Conducting assessments	76%	0-15%	4%
Managing and/or analyzing data	98%	0-30%	13%
Personally implementing interventions	53%	0-30%	3%
Dealing with administrative or technical issues related to RF	98%	0-50%	12%
Collecting information or resources requested by a teacher	98%	0-20%	7%
Other miscellaneous housekeeping activities/tasks	91%	0-40%	7%
Working on the RF budget	56%	0-10%	3%
Other (planning for professional development and meetings)	29%	0-30%	3%

Insights based on these data are:

- There continues to be great variation in the amount of time that coaches report spending in each activity.
- More coaches report in 2007-08 that they spend time conducting assessments. While more coaches report doing this activity, the mean percentage of time engaged in this activity is similar to the mean percent of time reported in 2006-07.
- More than half of coaches reported that they spend time personally implementing interventions with students. This marks a substantial increase in the percentage of coaches who reported engaging in this activity as compared to the 2006-07 responses. Although a larger percentage of coaches are reporting that they engage in this task, the mean percentage of time engaged in the task remains stable as compared to last year.
- Coach time spent in administrative duties remains stable from last year. Nearly all coaches perform administrative tasks (98%) and the percentage of time spent on these duties remains stable, despite falling in previous years.
- The vast majority of coaches model or observe in teachers' classrooms, meet one-on-one with teachers, and manage/analyze data. The single activity that takes the largest percentage of coach time is modeling or observing in classrooms.
- As in Years 3 and 4, some coaches report spending none of their time engaged in important coach activities such as meeting with teachers and analyzing data. These data indicate some coaches may not be meeting the challenge of balancing their time in order to fulfill all of their core responsibilities.

Additional insight into the time use of coaches comes from their answers to survey questions on professional development, technical assistance, and communication duties. These data are presented for all coaches in Table 3 below. See Appendix A for a copy of the complete coach survey.

Table 3. Coach Responses to Survey Questions on Time Use

Coaches on coach practice	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often
More than one hour per day on RF administrative issues	0%	9%	22%	37%	32%
Participate in District Level Leadership meetings	4%	15%	53%	16%	13%
Discuss reading with other RF coaches	0%	9%	31%	46%	15%
Discuss reading with state-level RF consultants	6%	57%	33%	2%	2%
Discuss reading with regional coaches	0%	49%	47%	2%	2%
Discuss program fidelity with school staff	0%	2%	42%	42%	15%

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

From these responses it can be seen that:

- The frequency with which coaches spend more than an hour a day on administrative issues “often” or “very often” is essentially the same as last year and marks a substantial decline from the years prior to 2006.
- There is a decrease in the frequency of District Leadership meeting attendance by coaches. Nineteen percent of coaches report that they “never” or “only rarely” attend these meetings as compared to 98% who reported that they attended these meetings sometimes or more frequently in 2006-07. This shift continues a trend of less frequent involvement in the District Leadership Meetings by coaches.
- A large percentage of coaches continue to discuss reading issues with other coaches at least once or twice a month. In 2007-08, all coaches report discussing reading with other coaches as compared to 95% in 2006-07, and only 80% in 2005-06. Additionally, in 2007-08, coaches are most likely to discuss reading with other coaches once or twice a week, as compared to 2006-07, when coaches were most likely to discuss reading with other coaches once or twice a month.
- As has been found in previous years, the vast majority of coaches in 2007-08 discuss reading with state-level RF consultants and regional coaches twice a month or less.
- In keeping with the increased focus on implementation fidelity, this year coaches were asked how frequently they discuss program fidelity with the staff at their school. More than half (57%) of coaches reported that they discuss fidelity with the staff at their school at least once a week.

In addition to coach reports of their time use, online surveys were completed by K-3 teachers, interventionists, and principals to report their perception of coach time use. In Table 4, stakeholder estimates of the frequency with which coaches engaged in certain activities are presented. See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively for copies of the coach, K-3 teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys.

Based on the context of the question and the given stakeholder role, certain questions were not included for specific stakeholder groups.

Table 4. Stakeholder Assessment of Coach Time Use

Coach Practice	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Stakeholder
In classrooms to model effective strategies	14%	30%	35%	18%	3%	K-3 Teacher
	9%	18%	30%	24%	20%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	27%	24%	49%	Principal
	2%	6%	47%	35%	11%	Coach
In classrooms to observe classroom practices	4%	16%	42%	31%	7%	K-3 Teacher
	4%	24%	40%	18%	15%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	2%	24%	73%	Principal
	0%	0%	9%	44%	47%	Coach
Meets with teachers for a coaching session	5%	12%	43%	37%	3%	K-3 Teacher
	11%	18%	31%	24%	16%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	16%	36%	49%	Principal
	0%	0%	26%	55%	20%	Coach
Provides constructive feedback based on observations	3%	16%	44%	31%	7%	K-3 Teacher
	8%	14%	38%	25%	16%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	13%	42%	44%	Principal
	0%	0%	27%	51%	22%	Coach
Personally conducts intervention(s)	29%	26%	25%	16%	5%	K-3 Teacher
	30%	28%	26%	8%	9%	Interventionist
	7%	11%	27%	18%	36%	Principal
	26%	33%	22%	9%	11%	Coach
Meets with teachers regarding assessment data	1%	9%	50%	35%	4%	K-3 Teacher
	5%	17%	35%	34%	9%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	16%	47%	38%	Principal
	0%	0%	51%	38%	11%	Coach
Meets with a group of teachers for professional development	0%	8%	60%	29%	3%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	3%	51%	30%	15%	Interventionist
	0%	2%	41%	30%	27%	Principal
	0%	2%	67%	29%	2%	Coach

Coach Practice	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Stakeholder
Discusses students' needs with teachers	1%	13%	27%	43%	16%	K-3 Teacher
	4%	10%	32%	27%	27%	Interventionist
						Principal
	0%	0%	2%	38%	60%	Coach
Provides teachers with literacy resources	1%	10%	36%	37%	16%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	14%	26%	36%	21%	Interventionist
						Principal
	0%	2%	27%	44%	27%	Coach
Discuss program fidelity with teachers	1%	8%	38%	41%	12%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	8%	30%	36%	27%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	18%	38%	44%	Principal
	0%	2%	42%	42%	15%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

In all of these survey responses, teachers and interventionists were asked to report how often coaches conducted the above activities with them. Coaches and principals were asked to report how often coaches worked with all teachers. Because of this difference in the questions, it is expected that coach and principal reports of coach practice will be higher than those of teachers and interventionists.

Based on these data:

- There is general agreement between principals, interventionists, and K-3 teachers on the presence and availability of the coach. As compared with earlier years, in 2007-08, interventionist, teacher, and coach reports of the availability of coaches remained the same while reports from principals on coach availability increased.
- Coaches and principals indicated coaches were in classrooms to model effective strategies about the same or slightly more frequently than last year. In 2007-08 nearly half of principals stated that coaches were in classrooms very often (every, or almost every day), up from about one third of principals in 2006-07.
- On many coach availability questions there continues to be an important minority of teachers and interventionists who report that the coach is never available for such tasks as observing classroom practices, meeting with teachers for coaching sessions, reviewing assessment data and providing literacy resources.
- By far, the category in which most teachers report never seeing the coach is coach modeling (14%). It should be noted that this percentage has actually decreased as compared to last year when 23% of teachers indicated that their coach is never in their classroom to model.

- As in previous years, principal estimates of coach time use is higher than other stakeholders.
- As was found in last year's survey, Interventionists report being coached more frequently than teachers. Additionally, interventionists were only slightly more likely than other stakeholders to report never getting feedback from coaches or having coaching sessions.
- This year there was a substantial decrease in the percentages of teachers and coaches who reported that coaches never personally conducted interventions and a corresponding increase in the frequency with which teachers and coaches reported that the coach was conducting interventions. This year more than 40% of coaches and teachers report that coaches are conducting interventions at least once a month or more frequently. This marks a substantial increase as compared to last year when only slightly more than 25% of coaches reported conducting interventions more than just a few times a year.

Site Visits

Site visit interviews with coaches, teachers, interventionists, and principals offered insight into coach time use. These insights include the following:

- **The majority of coaches are able to prioritize their time based on the needs of the staff at their school.** In 2007-08, veteran coaches frequently stated that they were able to provide more mentoring and coaching to teachers and other staff members who needed more assistance. It was common for coaches to state that the teachers who had been teaching using SBRR methods for several years were in need of less coaching and modeling which allowed the coach to focus on working with new teachers or interventionists who did not have previous experience in a RF school.
- **Coaches continue to attempt to limit the amount of time they spend on administrative duties so that they can maximize the amount of time they can spend in their coaching roles.** The coaches seem to be very aware that working on administrative duties is perhaps not the best and most effective use of their time. This awareness and their commitment to their coaching role results in coaches who work on these tasks outside of the school day. Although this is not an optimal arrangement, coaches state that the administrative demands ebb and flow depending on the time of year. This enables them to juggle the administrative tasks on top of their typical coaching roles.
- **The majority of coaches, in all cohorts, are successfully fulfilling their core coaching roles.** Some coaches, particularly in cohort three schools are still somewhat hesitant to provide direct feedback to teachers, but they acknowledge that feedback is an essential component to an effective coach. Additionally, it is very gratifying to observe teachers who have successfully incorporated the coach's suggestions into their teaching practices.

- **Data management continues to be a prime responsibility for coaches.** While coaches report that teachers are better able to understand their data, the coaches continue to take the lead when discussing data with teachers. Coaches commonly convene monthly grade level meetings to go over data with teachers. Although coaches typically lead these meetings, there are some schools in which teachers are becoming more involved in leading these discussions.
- **Coaches state that strong principal support and leadership are key factors for the successful implementation of RF.** In addition of clear, consistent, and open communication, coaches state that having a principal who shares and supports the literacy philosophy of RF makes their job easier and is essential for teacher buy-in and adherence to the RF program. As one coach stated, “We are all on the same page and we have each others’ back when it comes to Reading.”

Effectiveness in Collaboration

The core role of the RF coach is to facilitate teacher learning in and movement towards becoming independent practitioners of SBRR. First, the coach must be an expert in the knowledge and practices of SBRR; she/he must be able to share this knowledge with teachers; and finally she/he must be able to provide ongoing feedback to hone teaching techniques.

The Effectiveness in Collaboration section of this report seeks to assess coaches’ progress in these areas. Findings concerning coach effectiveness in collaboration are drawn from two main sources: coach and stakeholder assessments of coach practice and effectiveness from on-line surveys; and insights from site visit interviews and observations.

On-line Survey

Table 5 presents stakeholder assessments of coach skill, knowledge, and effectiveness. As found in the previous section, principals consistently rate coach knowledge and effectiveness higher than other stakeholders. See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively for copies of the coach, K-3 teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys.

Based on the context of the question and the given stakeholder role, certain questions were not included for specific stakeholder groups.

Table 5. Stakeholder Assessment of Coach Practice

Coach Practice	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
Valuable resource in SBRR	1%	2%	0%	4%	41%	53%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	1%	1%	4%	31%	61%	Interventionist
							Principal
	0%	0%	0%	0%	49%	51%	Coach
Valuable resource on the core reading program	1%	3%	1%	8%	35%	51%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	1%	3%	5%	34%	56%	Interventionist
							Principal
	0%	0%	0%	7%	55%	38%	Coach
Valuable resource on assessments	1%	1%	1%	2%	37%	58%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	1%	1%	3%	33%	62%	Interventionist
							Principal
	0%	0%	0%	2%	22%	76%	Coach
Valuable resource on interventions	1%	2%	2%	5%	37%	55%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	3%	1%	0%	32%	65%	Interventionist
							Principal
	0%	0%	0%	4%	42%	55%	Coach
Helped teachers better understand SBRR strategies	1%	1%	1%	7%	43%	47%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	4%	1%	6%	30%	57%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	0%	22%	78%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	0%	49%	51%	Coach
Helped teachers make the best use of the 90 minute block	1%	1%	2%	11%	38%	48%	K-3 Teacher
							Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	0%	27%	73%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	0%	49%	51%	Coach
Helped teachers or interventionists better use assessment data	1%	2%	1%	10%	42%	46%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	5%	0%	8%	31%	56%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%	93%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	0%	46%	55%	Coach
Helped teachers to use interventions	1%	2%	2%	11%	40%	45%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	8%	3%	4%	33%	53%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%	71%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	6%	56%	38%	Coach
Helped teachers improve classroom practices	0%	3%	2%	8%	43%	45%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	6%	1%	8%	32%	53%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	0%	29%	71%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	6%	47%	47%	Coach
Helped ensure proper expenditure of RF funds							K-3 Teacher
							Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	7%	16%	77%	Principal

Coach Practice	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
	0%	7%	4%	6%	26%	58%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include the following:

- At least 80% of stakeholders agree or strongly agree that coaches are valuable resources on SBRR, the core reading program, assessments, interventions, and the 90 minute block. As compared to the 2006-07 results, the strength of principal, teacher, and interventionists' opinion of the helpfulness of the coach increased.
- In comparison to the 2006-07 data, coaches' self-estimate of their helpfulness either remained the same or increased in every category except as a resource for the core reading program, which decreased only slightly. Given that most schools adopted a new core curriculum, it is understandable that coaches might feel less comfortable serving as a resource for the new curriculum.
- In assessment of coaches' help with SBRR, the core program, the 90 minute reading block, assessment data, and interventions, one to four percent of K-3 teachers and interventionists disagree or strongly disagree that the coach is a valuable resource. Teachers are most likely to report that the coach is not a valuable resource for the core program and interventionists are most likely to report that the coach is not a valuable resource for interventions. Although teachers were most likely to report that coach is not a valuable resource for the core last year, the percentage of teachers and interventionists who indicated that the coach was not helpful in these areas decreased across each of these domains.
- More than 80% of coaches and principals agreed or strongly agreed that the coach helped ensure that RF funds were expended properly. This is an increase in comparison to the 2006-07 data. It should also be noted that no principals disagreed with this statement and only 11% of coaches expressed some level of disagreement with this statement.

Site Visits

Site visit interviews with coaches, teachers, and principals offered insight into perceptions of coach performance. The following insights are provided:

- **Coaches are confident in the majority of their tasks and skills required to be a coach, but many continue to express some level of discomfort with having “tough” discussions with teachers.** Several teachers stated that the “tough” conversations are the most challenging aspects of their job. This discomfort may stem from the fact that they are not the teachers’ supervisor, but are trusted with ensuring that RF is being implemented with quality and fidelity. Conversely, since RF has been in place for multiple years coaches have stated that they encounter less resistance from teachers.

“Frankly, the teachers who didn’t like Reading First have asked for transfers or otherwise left our school. Basically everyone who is here now believes in the program and that makes my job much easier.” -- Coach

- **Adjusting to the new core curriculums has been a new challenge for coaches and teachers this year, but they are rising to the challenge and have gained confidence in using it.** All levels of school personnel discussed how adjusting to the core has taken getting some adjustment, but the coaches seem to have handled the transition well.

Whole group instruction is better than ever because we have new reading series and it is tied into the big 5. Is explicit and ties into the instruction. Our quality of reading is better since we have better resources for the teachers. I think next year will be better since we are in the pilot stage. Previously we did not have effective reading program now we are able to have instruction aligned with reading first. The teachers love the reading series it helps with reading instruction and resources for the teachers to provide to the students.
Coach

The Role of the Principal

Our Principal does walkthroughs about once a week. He's very on top of Reading First, he will make sure stations are appropriate, he looks at all of the data. He's totally involved in all the components. I think it is good that the students see him in our classrooms. It tells them that our principal thinks reading is important too. **Teacher**

I oversee the program and assist the coach with monitoring implementation. I also provide the teachers with evaluation and support when necessary, however, I feel my main role is to support the coach. We meet on a weekly basis and we discuss program implementation and maintenance. I am also starting to participate in the data meetings more frequently. I want to be there to support them and help them with anything they need on a school level to help them with implementation. **Principal**

As an instructional leader, the principal of a RF school plays a crucial role in educational change. The principal must lead the implementation through active involvement and knowledge of the initiative; she/he must ensure that teachers have the support that they need to implement the changes and monitor these changes by regular observation and feedback; and she/he should work closely with the coach but differentiate their roles so that he coach is not seen as an evaluator.

Summaries of key components of the principals' roles are presented in the Table 6 below. Data on the capacity of principals in each of these areas has been collected by multiple methods. The table below shows which areas were addressed by each major data collection strategy.

Table 6. Relation of Component of Principal's Role to Data Collection Method

Components of Principal Role	On-line Surveys	Site Visit Observations and Interviews	District Representative Interviews
Be actively involved leader of the Reading First implementation and have knowledge of Reading First requirements, SBRR, and effective instruction	*	*	
Ensure that teachers have all necessary support and are being held to a high level of program fidelity and observe classrooms and offers constructive feedback	*	*	*
Ensure that the coach is NOT an evaluator or administrator	*	*	

Based on the presentation "Key Areas of Grant-Based Monitoring" made at an Administrator's Meeting on April 21, 2004

Results related to these multiple components of the coaches' role are presented in two primary sections: Active Involvement and Implementation Leadership. In the principal Active Involvement section, data from multiple sources are presented to assess the extent to which RF principals are discussing RF with school and district stakeholders and offering monitoring and feedback to teachers.

The Implementation Leadership section focuses on the leadership of the principal. Data from multiple sources are presented to assess the extent to which principals make their implementation expectations clear and monitor progress of the RF initiative.

Active principal involvement and implementation leadership are assessed through coach, K-3 teacher, interventionist, and principal responses. In the Active Involvement section, data from on-line surveys which present stakeholder assessments of principal involvement are analyzed. In addition, observations and insights from site visit interviews are reported.

Active involvement

On-line Surveys

In on-line surveys, school stakeholders (including principals, coaches, teachers, and interventionists) were asked to assess the level of principal involvement in RF by estimating the frequency with which the principal engaged in various activities. Responses are presented in Table 7. See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively for copies of the coach, K-3 teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys.

Based on the context of the question and the given stakeholder role, certain questions were not included for specific stakeholder groups.

Table 7. Stakeholder Assessment of Principal Practice

Principal Practice	Never	Rarely (a few times a year)	Sometimes (once or twice a month)	Often (once or twice a week)	Very often (Every day or almost every day)	Stakeholder
In teachers' classrooms to monitor	5%	34%	39%	16%	6%	K-3 Teacher
	13%	38%	31%	18%	1%	Interventionist
	0%	2%	11%	60%	27%	Principal
	2%	10%	36%	36%	16%	Coach
Provides constructive feedback	10%	39%	38%	10%	5%	K-3 Teacher
	20%	37%	25%	17%	1%	Interventionist
	0%	2%	40%	51%	7%	Principal
	4%	13%	49%	26%	9%	Coach
Provides constructive feedback to the coach						K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	0%	18%	58%	24%	Principal
	7%	7%	37%	37%	11%	Coach
Meets with teachers regarding students assessment data	22%	35%	37%	5%	2%	K-3 Teacher
	42%	25%	23%	10%	0%	Interventionist
	0%	9%	53%	27%	11%	Principal

Principal Practice	Never	Rarely (a few times a year)	Sometimes (once or twice a month)	Often (once or twice a week)	Very often (Every day or almost every day)	Stakeholder
	6%	18%	53%	22%	2%	Coach
Meets with the RF coach regarding student assessment data						K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	0%	24%	63%	13%	Principal
	0%	7%	33%	51%	9%	Coach
Participates in teacher meetings	8%	27%	52%	12%	2%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	18%	50%	29%	3%	Interventionist
	0%	4%	44%	40%	11%	Principal
	2%	18%	46%	25%	9%	Coach
Informally discusses RF issues with teachers	15%	26%	46%	11%	2%	K-3 Teacher
	23%	27%	31%	17%	3%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	24%	44%	31%	Principal
	0%	13%	35%	38%	15%	Coach
Informally discusses RF issues with the coach						K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	0%	7%	44%	49%	Principal
	0%	2%	15%	44%	40%	Coach
Participates in leadership team meetings						K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	18%	59%	11%	11%	Principal
	2%	29%	42%	18%	9%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

In all of these survey responses, teachers and interventionists were asked to report how often principals conducted the above activities with them. Coaches and principals were asked to report how often coaches worked with all teachers. Because of this difference in the questions, it is expected that coach and principal reports of principal practice will be higher than those of teachers and interventionists.

Insights from these data include the following:

- In general, principals report that they are observing, offering feedback, and meeting with stakeholders more often than other stakeholder estimates; however, as compared to previous years, there continues to be stable percentages among stakeholders on principal availability. For example, whereas 58% of principals reported they provide constructive feedback to teachers at least once a week, 35% of

coaches and 15% of teachers stated similarly. These trends are similar to those of past years. These findings are almost identical to last year.

- In 2007-08 the percentage of interventionists who reported that they never received constructive feedback from their principal increased to 20% from 15% in 2006-07. While the percentage of teachers who reported that they never receive constructive feedback was steady at 10%. Slightly more than half of teachers (54%) and 43% of interventionists report that they receive constructive feedback from the principal at least a few times a year.
- While the percentage of coaches and principals who report that the principal meets with teachers regarding student assessment data at least once or twice a week is similar (38% of principals and 24% of coaches), there is less agreement between the principal and coach on how frequently the principal meets with the coach regarding student assessment data. More than three quarters of principals (76%) report meeting with coaches to review student assessment data at least once a week, whereas 40% of coaches report that principals meet with them about data only once a month or less.
- The amount of time principals and coaches report that they meet to informally discuss RF are in strong agreement and occur quite regularly. A total of 89% of principals and 84% of coaches estimate they meet together informally at least one a week. Although regular, as compared to 2006-07, these meetings are slightly less frequent.
- In 2006-07, coaches and principals report that they meet less frequently than in 2005-06. In addition, 26% of coaches report that the principal offers them constructive feedback a few times a year or less.
- In 2007-08 the percentage of principals who reported meeting teachers once a week or more frequently decreased while the percentage of principals who reported meeting with teachers once or twice a month increased as compared to 2006-07. Although principals reported meeting less frequently, the percentage of coaches, teachers, and interventionists who reported in this behavior did not shift.
- The vast majority of principals and coaches agree that the principal participates in district leaderships meetings at least monthly. As compared to 2006-07 principals report that they attend leadership meetings less frequently in 2007-08. This is a trend that has been seen in the data since 2005-06

Site visits

Site visit interviews offered insight into perceptions of principal involvement. Findings from site visit data include the following:

- **Schools with principals who take on a vocal and visible role with respect to at their schools are seen as interested in instruction by the teachers and make coaches feel supported and valued in their school.** In schools where the principal did observe classroom teaching and provided follow up comments, many teachers reported that the feedback made them feel like the principal really understood the program and was supportive. Additionally, coaches commonly stated that when principals were involved and visible to the reading first teachers it reinforced the importance of the program and it made their role easier.
- **Most coaches report frequent communication with principals.** Most coaches interviewed reported meeting with their principal in formal weekly meetings as well as informally as needed. The topics of these meetings were also varied and ranged from implementation issues, data analysis, scheduling, etc. this mix of formal and informal opportunities for communication works well for most of the coaches interviewed.
- **Many principals are keenly aware of their school's assessment data and often attend grade-level and professional development meetings.** In 2005-06 most principals reported that data was one of their most frequent discussion items with coaches. In 2007-08 principals continue to monitor data, delve deeper into their assessment data and will discuss assessment findings with teachers and strategize classroom practice to meet needs of the students.
- **Some principals continue to have minimal communication with their coach and low visibility in their school's classrooms.** Survey and interview data suggest that some teachers do not feel that the principal actively supports and monitors the implementation of the program. In addition, teachers who are not observed by the principal or do not receive feedback from their principal are unsure of what the principal expects of them with respect to the RF program.

Implementation leadership

The second major question concerning the role of the principal is their role as implementation leader. In Table 8, on-line survey responses concerning principal leadership related specifically to RF are presented. See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively for copies of the coach, K-3 teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys.

Table 8. Stakeholder Assessment of Principal Leadership

Principal Practice	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
Provides strong leadership	5%	13%	2%	16%	46%	18%	K-3 Teacher
	4%	5%	3%	11%	43%	35%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	2%	67%	31%	Principal
	2%	9%	4%	9%	36%	40%	Coach
Effectively monitors implementation	5%	11%	5%	15%	48%	16%	K-3 Teacher
	4%	4%	0%	14%	45%	34%	Interventionist

Principal Practice	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
	0%	0%	0%	9%	65%	27%	Principal
	2%	7%	2%	18%	38%	33%	Coach
Expects implementation	0%	1%	1%	6%	42%	52%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	1%	4%	0%	36%	58%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	0%	7%	93%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	4%	27%	69%	Coach
The principal and coach work together effectively on RF	1%	3%	5%	14%	45%	33%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	0%	1%	8%	38%	51%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	0%	20%	80%	Principal
	0%	2%	4%	7%	26%	62%	Coach
Actively involved in district level leadership Team							K-3 Teacher
							Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	11%	39%	50%	Principal
	2%	4%	6%	11%	43%	35%	Coach
Manages the RF budget							K-3 Teacher
							Interventionist
	9%	9%	5%	19%	35%	23%	Principal
	22%	28%	4%	11%	20%	15%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include the following:

- The majority of stakeholders agree that principals provide strong leadership for RF and monitor teachers' implementation. While principals are most likely to agree or strongly agree, the majority of teachers, interventionists, and coaches also agree or strongly agree. The level of positive agreement about principal leadership is similar to the 2006-07 data.
- The vast majority (94%-100%) of all stakeholders agree or strongly agree that the principal expects teachers to implement RF. Principals overwhelmingly strongly agree. These findings are similar to those of 2007-08.
- This year stakeholders were asked to indicate whether or not they agreed that the principal and coach work together effectively on issues relating to RF. At least three quarters of each stakeholder group agreed or strongly agreed that the principal and coach worked together effectively.
- Principals and coaches are in close agreement that the principal is actively involved in district level leadership. Over 75% of coaches agree or strongly agree and over 95%

of principal agree or strongly agree. These findings are similar to those from previous years.

- Patterns of principal involvement in the RF budget continue to shift. Both principals and coaches were less likely to agree or strongly agree that principals manage the RF budget in 2007-08. In addition to this shift, coaches were also more likely to report that they disagreed or strongly disagreed that the principal was managing the RF budget, whereas the percentage of principals who disagreed or strongly disagreed remained the same. These findings would seem to indicate that principals may be less involved with the management of the RF budget as compared to previous years.

Site visits

Site visit interviews offered insight into principal involvement and leadership. From these data the following insights are offered:

- **Enthusiasm for Reading First trickles down to teachers when they perceive that the administration is excited about the program.** Teachers said that it was easy to get excited about a program when they knew that the principal was behind the initiative. Additionally, coaches appreciate the tone that a supportive principal can set among the staff. Coaches also report that having a principal who is concerned about program fidelity ensures that teachers have the resources they need.
- **A good relationship between the principal and the coach is essential for strong leadership in the school.** When the coach and the principal are working together on a common goal, teachers report less confusion and clearer vision for the program. In some schools teachers reported that a previous coach/principal relationship was not supportive and at times they seemed to contradict each other. Staff turnover has occurred and the teachers now feel like real progress is being made.
- **Principals monitor RF implementation through a variety of methods.** Principals monitor RF by monitoring data, attending PD meetings, and discussing instruction with the coach. Additionally the vast majority of principals conduct first hand observations of literacy instruction in classrooms. Most principals reported doing daily or weekly walkthroughs during the 90 minute block. Some principals are even conduct joint walkthroughs with the coach at their school. Despite this, there are still some schools in which stakeholders continue to report that principal presence in classrooms is rare.

The Role of the Teacher

It is funny, but now that I have gone through all of the professional development and trainings, I find myself wishing that I had learned all of this before. The information is so good I feel bad that I haven't always taught reading this way.

Teacher

I think our team meetings are key – we have 2 teams at our school: K-1 and 2-3. During these meetings we can talk about our issues, bounce ideas off of each other and basically help and support each other. We are all in this together and it helps that everyone is so willing to lend a hand.

Teacher

Reading First (RF) is a classroom-based initiative. Therefore, teachers and changes in teacher practice are the central feature of any examination of RF implementation. The key components of the teachers' role are presented in Table 7 below along with notations regarding primary data sources used to examine each component.

Table 7. Relation of Teacher's Role to Data Collection Method

Component of Teacher's Role	On-line Surveys	Site Visit Observations and Interviews	District Representative Interviews
Provide SBRR-based instruction to students	*	*	*
Make instructional decisions based on data	*	*	*
Provide appropriate interventions	*	*	*
Collaborate and share knowledge of SBRR and PD	*	*	

•Based on the presentation "Key Areas of Grant-Based Monitoring" made at an Administrator's Meeting on April 21, 2004

Data related to teacher implementation of RF in the classroom is discussed in the [Changes in the Classroom](#) section. A summary of those findings is presented below:

Overall, in 2007-08, the majority of teachers observed the 90 minute reading block daily, administered assessments as scheduled, and established flexible groups. In addition, teachers and other stakeholders report that instruction during the 90 minute reading block is increasingly based in SBRR and teacher skill in interpretation and application of assessment data to establish flexible groups and meet student needs is strengthening. As compared to previous years, resistance to flexible grouping and reading workstations has decreased. Classroom management continues to be a challenge for some teachers who have limited access to extra adults in the classroom. Some teachers still report uneasiness with differentiating instruction based on assessment data and seem to be hesitant to adjust small groups frequently. Teachers seem to be pleased with the gains that they have seen in their students and many state that they would not go back to the way they taught reading prior to RF even when the program ended. Complete data related to teacher implementation of RF in the classroom is discussed in the Changes in the Classroom section (see pages XX-XX).

In addition, in interviews teachers often reflect upon their practice as a reading teacher. Findings are presented below:

- **While many teachers may have had initial reservations about RF, they are increasingly positive about RF.** Teachers commonly state that the Professional development that they have received has improved their understanding of RF. The PD has given them the skills and knowledge that has contributed to their comfort with the program.
- **Teachers are enthusiastic about the gains they have seen in their students.** Teachers, particularly those in the first cohort, report seeing positive changes in their students. Teachers also state that the gains they have seen in students motivate them to continue to teach reading the way RF approaches reading instruction.
- **The new textbook adoption has been a challenge for the teachers this year.** Adjusting to the new core was mentioned as a challenge by teachers in almost every school that had a site visit. Although it was perceived as a challenge, teachers seem to have worked collaboratively with the coach and other teachers to adjust to the different components.

Leadership and District Role

I guess we've probably been the central organizer and have worked to try and keep all four of our sites at least in the same ballpark with each other, accommodating the differences that exist in their schools and school population, and yet not having any one of them being wildly different from the other three, in terms of how they implement the grant.

-- District Representative

Well, basically ensuring that the professional development component of Reading First is being coordinated at the buildings with the reading pro kids; making sure that all of their supply orders and any materials that they need are processed at the level that I'm at because even though they're initiated at the building level they have to come through my office; making sure that there are subs available at the building for the professional development; contracting with the different technical assistance providers; making contact with them; making sure that we have all of their billings and anything that they may need when they come to present PD to the staff; making sure that all of the end of the month budgets are aligned; basically those types of issues are what we deal with; and addressing any issues the coach may have with the teaching staff; getting all of the reports in on time, getting the grant written.

-- Director of Elementary Education

Summaries of key components of leadership and district roles are presented in Table 8 below. Data on leadership capacity and district level stakeholder practice in each of these areas has been collected by multiple methods; the table below shows which areas were addressed by each major data collection strategy.

Table 8. Relation of District Leadership Team/District Role to Data Collection Method

Component of Leadership and District Role•	On-line Surveys	Site Visit Observations and Interviews	District Representative Interviews
Have knowledge of Reading First requirements			*
Facilitate full and timely implementation of Reading First	*	*	*
Ensure that school personnel receive professional development and other resources as needed		*	*

•Based on the presentation "Key Areas of Grant-Based Monitoring" made at an Administrator's Meeting on April 21, 2004

This section deals with leadership, the district representative, and the District level role. The first section provides information on which stakeholders participate in district level support, the second focuses on what leadership teams and district stakeholders do in the context of Reading First (RF), and the final section presents feedback on the effectiveness of leadership teams and district in RF implementation from on-line surveys and site visits.

Who are RF district representatives?

Data on the job description of district representatives and the role of the district in RF were collected during phone interviews with all RF district representatives. Twenty-three districts

were represented in the phone interviews. However, in some cases, multiple district-level stakeholders responded to questions in a teleconference format. Of those stakeholders:

- 16% (4) are principals or assistant principals.
- 24% (6) are Title 1, Reading First, Federal Program or Development Coordinators.
- 8% (2) are Directors of Elementary Programs or K-12 Curriculum & Instruction.
- 16% (4) are Superintendents/ Deputy Superintendents /Assistant Superintendents.
- 12% (3) are Reading Coaches/District Reading Coaches.
- 24% (6) are Elementary Reading/Curriculum Coordinators.

Each year since 2004-05, the number of districts represented in the district representative interviews has increased. In 2006-07, more total stakeholders were involved in the interviews than in previous years; however in 2007-08, more districts were involved in the interviews than in previous years. In addition, more school-level professionals are serving as district representatives and participating in district representative interviews. A larger proportion of district representatives are Title 1, RF, Federal Program, or Development Coordinators, Superintendants, and Elementary Reading / Curriculum Coordinators.

The vast majority of district representatives for RF and other stakeholders who participated in phone interviews have been involved in **RF** since their grants were awarded. They also have a great deal of experience in their districts. The following provides an overview of the district representatives' previous experience in the district:

- 5% (1) had been in the district for less than 2 years.
- 14% (3) had been in the district between 3 and 5 years.
- 41% (9) had been in the district between 6 and 10 years.
- 27% (6) had been in the district between 11 and 25 years.
- 14% (3) had been in the district more than 25 years.

These findings are similar to every year the grant has been awarded and implemented. Overall, the majority of district representatives are veterans in their districts.

What is the role of the district representative?

District representatives were asked to describe the amount of time that they spend in RF-related activities and what activities they and other district personnel perform.

Estimates of the percent of time that district representatives spent on RF matters per week ranged from between 1% and 100% (based on a 40-hour work week).

- 19% (4) representatives stated that they spent less than 5% of their time per week on RF matters.

- 24% (5) stated that between 5 and 15% of their time went to RF matters every week.
- 19% (4) said that they spent between 16 and 30% of their time on RF matters.
- 14% (3) stated that they spent between 31 and 50% of their time on RF matters.
- 24% (5) stated that they spent over 50% of their time on RF matters.

These findings are similar to those of previous years. Overall, the majority of district representatives spend less than 30% of their time on RF matters. However, representatives, especially those who are coaches or RF coordinators, spend nearly all of their time on RF. In comparison with previous years, 2007-08 answers to the question “What are your responsibilities?” were quite similar. District involvement increased dramatically in 2005-06 and in 2006-07, and has continued to increase in many districts in 2007-08. As in 2005-06 and 2006-07, the most common activities for district representatives were: holding meetings for all stakeholders, working with the budget, and facilitating communication between stakeholders. While these activities are similar to those of previous years, the importance and centrality of district involvement has increased in most districts. Unlike previous years, schools are more likely to acknowledge the support from the district as beneficial and essential for implementation. An outline of the major duties and roles for district personnel is presented below:

- District Leadership
 - Serve as a support system for the schools, especially for teachers, coaches, and principals
 - Coordinate planning for creation of action plans
 - Create district literacy plan that integrates RF and non-RF schools into one consistent framework
 - Use data to inform district-wide instructional planning and guide PD selection
 - Ensure that all stakeholders are participating in implementation of excellent literacy instruction (from superintendant to paraprofessionals)
 - Oversee adherence to and regularly update action plans and continuation charts
 - Ensure that all requirements of the grant, including state guidelines and district goals are met
 - Maintain and coordinate district-wide calendar, accounting for assessment dates and PD needs
 - Establish communication and facilitate cooperation between RF and non-RF schools in the district
 - Communicate with the school board and other outside stakeholders about the efficacy of literacy instruction in the district
 - Write and coordinate grants at the district level to ensure continuous implementation of SBRI across the district
- Oversight and District-Level Monitoring

- Facilitate and attend weekly meetings with coaches and/or Title 1 and RF personnel
- Prepare monthly agendas for RF district-level meetings
- Monitor and discuss assessment data
- Set and monitor expectations for student achievement
- Visit schools and oversee implementation
- Provide feedback for teachers and other school stakeholders based on classroom observations and assessment data
- Coordination and Communication
 - Arrange and attend meetings with district-level personnel, coaches, consultants, technical assistants, principals, and teachers
 - Draft agendas for meetings based on action plans and data analysis
 - Regularly discuss data with district and school stakeholders
 - Be knowledgeable about RF requirements and work as a team to meet such requirements
 - Answer stakeholder questions about RF requirements
 - Attend RF administrator meetings
 - Reinforce the importance of RF fidelity
- Provide Management and Oversee Logistics
 - Plan for substitute teachers and/or paraprofessionals
 - Hire or coordinate external consultants and/or district personnel for curriculum, pedagogy, or data needs
 - Order materials for school and manage budget and distribution
 - Work with all stakeholders to build good rapport
 - Coordinate and monitor stakeholders in completion of timelines and monthly goals
 - Ensure availability of technology for data maintenance and analysis
 - Provide technical support and assistance as well as advanced technology to further assist and enhance implementation
- Budget Administration
 - Monitor budgets and ensure that funds are expended as planned
 - Provide budget breakdowns to determine how and when money should be spent according to need
 - Hold meetings with the coaches and other stakeholders to discuss financial updates and requirements
 - Prepare midyear reports on school expenditure
 - Disperse funds to continue to support RF goals and objectives
- Data Management and Report Writing

- Check DIBELS reports with coaches
 - Monitor progress with teachers, interventionists, coaches, and principals
 - Prepare district reports on budgets, professional development, and technical assistance
 - Facilitate the writing of grants and district action plans
 - Be knowledgeable about assessment data and facilitate communication on assessment results
 - Use assessment data to guide intervention practices
- Professional development
 - Coordinate district-level professional development and technical assistance
 - Increase the amount of professional development opportunities available that are aligned with district-level goals
 - Focus professional development in areas that data and stakeholder feedback suggest are necessary
 - Participate in grade level meetings and staff development opportunities
 - Purchase materials needed for student and teacher development

Based on these data from telephone interviews, as compared to the 2005-06 and 2006-07 results, district representatives and district-level personnel have continued to deepen their role in RF implementation. Time commitments from district representatives have increased compared 2005-06 and 2006-07. In 2006-07, district representatives are allotting on average 15% of their time per week for RF duties, whereas district representatives are now allotting on average, up to 30% of their time per week for RF duties. Furthermore, an additional 38% state that at least 30% of their work week hours are devoted to RF. District representatives continue in the current year to be highly experienced administrators and veteran educators. Most importantly, the district-wide role and importance in implementation has continued to grow in 2007-08. In many districts, leaders have established a common set of priorities for all elementary schools and are unifying their literacy plans around RF practice. Furthermore, as compared to 2006-07, RF schools are observing an increase in the support they receive from their district as well as from the state.

What is the role of the district as a whole?

As was found in previous years, the goals and purposes of the districts as a whole are similar to those listed for district representatives. The most commonly mentioned roles are:

- Serving as a support system
- Maintenance of budgets
- Purchasing
- Keeping all stakeholders informed and ensuring that all components of divergent programs link together to achieve the overall educational goal of the district
- Coordination of professional development
- Hiring of support personnel for RF schools and offering additional assistance (e.g. the hiring of clerical personnel and offering budget training for coaches)

Many of the critical functions of district level support are accomplished through meetings. The majority of district representatives regularly meet for some district-level meeting. These meetings are most commonly held weekly, monthly, or quarterly. Similar to previous years, district representatives reported that superintendents, principals, coaches, external consultants, and they are the most common attendees of the meetings. The most commonly reported topics are budgets discussion of data, strategic planning, professional development, and curriculum.

One major task which is often the responsibility of district level personnel (in conjunction with coaches and principals) is maintenance of the RF budget. In interviews, district representatives frequently reported that ensuring that RF funds are expended is their responsibility. Some representatives report monthly meetings with large groups of stakeholders (finance directors, principals, coaches, external consultants, grade-level representatives) while some report they work on the budget relatively independently. In 2007-08 stakeholders continue to report that maintenance of the budget is a very demanding process. As a result, in many districts, district-level personnel have lessened the load on coaches by overseeing the budget. Additionally, while some stakeholders continue to report that RF budget management is overly complicated and time consuming, some report that monthly reporting provides a helpful double-check.

Other stakeholder assessment of District Leadership Team and District-level support

Principals, coaches, K-3 teachers, and interventionists assessed the role and effectiveness of the District Leadership Team and their district level support through on-line surveys and site visit interviews. First, on-line survey data are presented; this is followed by insights from site visit interviews.

On-line Surveys

In the on-line, survey stakeholders were asked to reflect on the role and effectiveness of the District Leadership Team, see Table 8 below. See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively for copies of the coach, K-3 teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys.

Table 8. Stakeholder Assessment of District Leadership Team Practice

District Leadership Team Practice	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
RF Coach is actively involved in the District Leadership Team							K-3 Teacher
							Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	2%	21%	77%	Principal
	4%	4%	0%	11%	35%	46%	Coach
District Leadership							K-3 Teacher
							Interventionist

District Leadership Team Practice	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
Team has a clear sense of purpose and direction	0%	0%	2%	11%	59%	27%	Principal
	4%	2%	4%	11%	50%	30%	Coach
District Leadership Team helps in effective implementation							K-3 Teacher
							Interventionist
	0%	0%	2%	9%	55%	34%	Principal
	4%	6%	0%	20%	43%	28%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include the following:

- As has been found in the previous two years, 90% of coaches agree or strongly agree that they are actively involved in the District Leadership Team.
- The vast majority of principals and coaches agree or strongly agree that the district leadership team has a clear sense of purpose and direction and that the district leadership team helps in effective implementation. These results are similar to those of 2006-07.

Site Visits

Site visit interviews with school stakeholders offered further insight into the functioning of the District Leadership team. From these interviews, the following insights were observed for 2007-08:

- **District Leadership has expanded but in RF schools, the foundation of implementation remains the coach, principal, and teachers.** Stakeholders tend to report that their school team is where the real change and implementation issues are addressed.
- **Schools that experience issues with a lack of district leadership tend to focus more on their school level leadership teams.** While some districts have made attempts to coordinate with other schools when district leadership is lacking, many choose to focus on the leadership within their own school.
- **Cohort three stakeholders report appreciation for the support of peer cohort one and two schools.** Stakeholders in their second year of implementation in 2007-08 continue to frequently report strong support from cohort one and two schools in their district.
- **As found in earlier years, there continue to be schools without effective district leadership.** Those schools with only one RF school in the district often serve as their own school-based leadership team. Further, there continue to be

schools in multi-RF districts that report lack of support from the district. Some stakeholders comment on a lack of communication in these situations. In extreme cases, stakeholders note that the superintendant or other high-level administrators does not see RF as a priority.

Professional Development and Technical Assistance

The Voyager program is a useful tool for professional development. Teachers are able to use information from the program to adapt work centers. The reading academy has also been a good professional development. **Coach**

Something that would help to increase the fidelity of implementation of RF is to keep up with professional development, it's the only time when K-3 teachers are all together for half a day, to talk to each other and learn from each other. **Principal**

This section provides feedback on the professional development and technical assistance (PD/TA) that are provided in the RF initiative. The first section on state-level PA/TA lists the meetings and sessions that were offered by IDOE. The final section summarizes stakeholder feedback on the usefulness of PD/TA sessions and types.

State-level PD and TA

In 2007-08, the leadership team of Indiana RF included the RF Director, Reading Consultants, and Regional Coaches. The RF leadership team provides technical assistance and professional development to district- and school-level RF staff. Between September 2007 and August 2008, there were four general types of PD/TA meetings arranged by IDOE: general meetings, coach meetings, administrator meetings, and summer academies. Details related to each of these types are provided below.

General Stakeholder Meetings

IDOE offers PD for all interested Indiana stakeholders. These meetings inform statewide stakeholders on the components and importance of RF and innovations in literacy instruction. One general session was offered in 2007-08:

- October 1-2, 2007: Indiana State Literacy Conference

Coaches' meetings

The second main type of PD/TA provided by IDOE was coach meetings. Coach training was the single most intensive form of PD provided by IDOE. Professional development was presented to continue to advance the knowledge and skills of veteran coaches as well as those new to the position. Sessions included the following:

- August 7-8, 2007: RF Coaches' Meeting
- October 15-16, 2007: Coaches' Meeting: Cognitive Coaching
- September 10, 2007: Coaches' Meeting
- November 19-20, 2007: RF Coaches' Meeting: Cognitive Coaching
- November 29-30, 2007: Coaches' Meeting Cohorts 1-3

Administrator meetings

The third category of IDOE provided PD/TA meetings was administrator meetings. The main purpose of these meetings was to update veteran administrators (such as RF district representatives, central office personnel, and principals) on the components of the RF initiative or inform new administrators of RF requirements. These sessions included the following:

- September 6, 2007: Administrator's Meeting, Cohorts 1-3

2008 Summer Academies

The final type of PD/TA offered by IDOE was Summer Academies. The Summer Academies are intensive meetings for all RF school stakeholders. Summer academies included the following:

- July 31-August 2: Indiana Teacher Reading Academy, Grades K-3

Stakeholder feedback on PD/TA

In this section, findings related to the types of PD/TA stakeholders received are provided, as well as stakeholder perceptions on the usefulness of PD and TA.

On-line surveys

Table 9 below presents stakeholder assessments of teacher participation in PD opportunities. Teachers and interventionists were asked to report how often they took advantage of PD opportunities, and coaches and principals were asked to estimate the same for all teachers. Coach and principal estimates are expected to be higher than those of teachers and interventionists. See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively for copies of the coach, K-3 teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys.

Table 9. Stakeholder Assessment of Professional Development Participation

Professional Development	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Stakeholder
Teachers take advantage of professional development opportunities	0%	17%	44%	24%	16%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	18%	50%	20%	13%	Interventionist
	0%	7%	32%	39%	23%	Principal
	0%	2%	55%	24%	20%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- All stakeholder groups stated that teachers take advantage of PD at least a few times a year and the vast majority of stakeholders estimate that teachers take advantage of

PD opportunities at least once a month. These findings are similar to those in 2006-07.

- In general, interventionists continue to report that teachers take advantage of PD opportunities at a frequency similar to K-3 teachers.
- Coach estimates of PD participation are similar, but slightly lower, than those of teachers.

Table 10 presents stakeholders assessment of the usefulness of PD offerings. The first question refers to the usefulness of PD for teachers and the second for coaches. See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively for copies of the coach, K-3 teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys.

Table 10. Stakeholder Assessment of Professional Development Usefulness

Principal Practice	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
Professional development meets teachers' needs	2%	4%	2%	13%	52%	27%	K-3 Teacher
	4%	4%	3%	10%	40%	40%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	2%	5%	64%	30%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	17%	50%	33%	Coach
Professional development meets my needs as RF coach							K-3 Teacher
							Interventionist
							Principal
	0%	6%	4%	22%	46%	22%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- The majority of all stakeholder groups agrees or strongly agrees that the PD meets teacher needs. These numbers are very similar to the findings from the previous two years.
- Coaches continue to agree or strongly agree that the professional development meets their needs as a RF coach.

Site visits

Site visit interviews with school and district stakeholders offered further insight into stakeholders' assessment of the usefulness of professional development and technical assistance. From these interviews:

- Stakeholders were pleased with the number of PD activities that they can choose from, although not all coaches felt that teachers were quick to apply the new knowledge into their classroom practices. Some coaches felt that the

teachers in their schools did not translate their new knowledge into classroom application as timely as they could have.

- **While much of the PD content is useful, not all teachers benefit equally.** Coaches overwhelmingly feel that the content of the majority of the PD is useful, they would like to see some improvements in the PD offerings so that more teachers could benefit from the offerings.
- **Cohort one or two stakeholders continue to report that much state-wide PD designed for all schools did not meet their needs.** Cohort one and cohort two stakeholders report that they benefit more from the on-site PD more than the state-wide PD. It is common for these stakeholders to feel that they have more specific questions and needs that aren't able to be addressed in the state-wide training opportunities.
- **Coaches seem to be most positive about PD that is on site and tailored specifically to the needs of their teachers.** Many coaches stated that their staff were able to get the most out of the PD that was on site and allowed the presenters to specifically address the needs at their school.
- **Voyager three has been less well received than Voyager one and two.** Across the state, stakeholders reported that Voyager three was disjointed and less beneficial to the teachers and interventionists.

Changes in the Classroom

The fifth year of the Reading First (RF) evaluation examines impact of the RF reform as well as continued progress in implementation. Key questions concerning implementation are:

- To what extent do RF schools implement the five essential reading components?
- To what extent do RF classrooms implement specific instructional strategies such as the 90 minute block, progress monitoring, interventions, etc?
- What types of reading instruction strategies are consistently applied in all K-3 classrooms?

Large scale school reform often comes in the form of an initiative. But RF, like other educational change initiatives, is in effect many interconnected innovations working together to make up one large reform. For the purpose of this report, different innovations or facets of RF innovations are discussed separately although they are interconnected. These facets include the following:

- 90 minute reading block and SBRR.
- Assessment and assessment as a guide for instruction.
- Flexible grouping and reading workstations.
- Interventions and the role of the interventionist.

These are also the titles of the four sections that make up the changes in the classroom component of this document. These sections examine the progress in these areas made over the first five years of implementation, assess stakeholder agreement and divergence on the fidelity of implementation of these aspects of the program, steps for progress in these areas, and highlight common concerns in each area.

90 Minute Reading Block and SBRR

At first there we had challenges maintaining the 90 minute block, but since we have been doing this (RF) for 5 years, it is now part of our school environment and our goals. We are now at the point where teachers are not interrupted by announcements and everyone understands that time is non-negotiable. **Coach**

I actually sometimes see the teachers going longer than the 90 minutes. So I have to remind them that they shouldn't go over too frequently because there are other subjects that they need to cover. We accommodate the block by scheduling all of the specials in the afternoon to avoid interrupting the block time. **Principal**

This section presents data assessing the state of implementation of the 90 minute reading block and SBRR across RF schools. Data will be presented from on-line surveys, district representative surveys, and site visits.

On-line surveys

K-3 teachers, interventionists, principals, and coaches were asked through on-line surveys to gauge teachers' regular implementation of the 90 minute block. Results of that survey are presented in Table 11 and summarized below.

Table 11. Stakeholder Assessment of Implementation of the 90 Minute Reading Block

90 Minute Reading Block and SBRR	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Stakeholder
Teachers implement the 90 minute reading block for reading	2%	0%	0%	2%	96%	K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	2%	98%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	4%	96%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- Stakeholders agree that the 90 minute reading block is implemented daily. The vast majority of all stakeholders (96-98%) state that the 90 minute reading block is observed every day.
- A very small percentage of principals, teachers, and coaches report that the 90 minute reading block is not implemented every day. Two percent of teachers report that the 90 minute block is never implemented.
- These results are very similar to those of 2005-06 and 2006-07.

Stakeholders were also asked to assess teachers' use of SBRR (see Table 12 below):

Table 12. Stakeholder Assessment of Teacher Use of SBRR

90 Minute Reading Block and SBRR	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Stakeholder
The majority of K-3 teachers effectively use SBRR strategies	0%	0%	1%	5%	58%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	0%	1%	5%	58%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	4%	33%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	6%	44%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- The vast majority (94-96%) of K-3 teachers, interventionists, principals, and coaches agree or strongly agree that the majority of teachers in their school effectively use SBRR strategies.

- Only one percent of teachers disagree that the majority of teachers in their school effectively use SBRR strategies.
- These results are very similar to those of 2005-06 and 2006-07.

Site visits and District Representative Interviews

The patterns found in on-line surveys and district representative surveys were reinforced by findings in site visit interviews and observations. In general:

- **The most commonly cited aspect of RF that was being implemented with the most fidelity was the 90 minute reading block.** Almost every stakeholder interviewed during the site visits stated that the 90 minute block was implemented with the most fidelity by the greatest number of teachers. It was not uncommon for stakeholders to state that the 90 minute block was, “sacred” and that every attempt was made to eliminate any disruptions or distractions at that time.
- **The only teachers who admitted to not always following the 90 minute block were half day Kindergarten teachers.** Half day Kindergarten teachers did admit that they do have difficulty getting in a full 90 minutes each day. Although full day Kindergarten classrooms are becoming more common, half day Kindergarten teachers state that it is difficult to constantly maintain a full 90 minute block.
- **Some schools that have had difficulty with principals respecting the 90 minute block in the past have reported improvement.** These schools stated that having the schedules posted outside classroom doors helps principals and other school personnel remember exactly when their 90 minute block is thereby reducing unnecessary interruptions.

Assessment and Assessment as a Guide for Instruction

It's a process. At first we were so busy progress monitoring and weren't totally equipped to use the data, but now we are at a better level. Now I can see what kids need and I can interpret and use the data to help specific children. Sometimes my coach helps me too because she is an expert and can see things that I don't see. In working on phonemes and phonics, it was hard at first to understand and apply the feedback but now I really see the value in the data.

-- Teacher

That's (using assessments as a guide for instruction) been huge because that allows the instructor to know right away where did that child need help and then they're able to modify or choose a different instructional strategy to help that child master whatever that literacy skill might be. Also, that internet based assessment process has been really helpful because they get immediate feedback that can be used the same day if needed.

District Representative

The DIBELS assessment has really changed the face of what we do at the elementary schools. Having teachers progress monitor those students ongoing and having that assessment informing instruction has been a huge change. We really didn't have a good assessment piece that informed our instruction before and now we do.

Principal

This section on Assessment and Assessment as a Guide for Instruction will present data from on-line surveys, district representative surveys, and site visits. These stakeholders' responses will provide feedback on the level of use of assessments and their application in classroom practice.

On-line surveys

In on-line surveys K-3 teachers, interventionists, principals, and coaches were asked to gauge teachers' use of assessments. Results of that survey are presented in Table 13 and summarized below.

Table 13. Stakeholder Assessment of Assessment Use

Assessment Practices	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Stakeholder
Teachers use assessments to monitor student achievement	0%	0%	11%	59%	30%	K-3 Teacher
	4%	4%	22%	53%	17%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	25%	53%	22%	Principal
	0%	0%	15%	53%	33%	Coach
Teachers use assessment results to help guide instructional strategies	0%	0%	12%	39%	50%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	6%	19%	40%	33%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	16%	44%	40%	Principal
	0%	0%	18%	33%	49%	Coach

Assessment Practices	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Stakeholder
Teachers change instructional plans based on assessment results	0%	0%	19%	51%	30%	K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	0%	27%	44%	29%	Principal
	0%	0%	27%	51%	22%	Coach
Teachers use assessment data to identify students who need interventions	0%	2%	17%	51%	31%	K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	0%	18%	51%	31%	Principal
	0%	0%	27%	42%	31%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- Teachers, principals and coaches tended to agree about the frequency with which teachers are using assessment data.
- Over 75% of teachers, coaches, and principals reported that teachers used assessments to monitor student achievement at least once a week. Interventionists reported slightly lower frequencies than other stakeholders.
- In contrast to last year, coach estimates of teacher use of assessments decreased slightly. It should be noted that the vast majority (85% of coaches and 89% of teachers) report that teachers use assessments to monitor student achievement at least once a week.
- Nearly half of coaches and 50% of K-3 teachers report that teachers use assessment results to guide instructional strategies daily or almost every day. This is a slight increase from 2006-07.
- All K-3 teachers, principals and coaches report that teachers modify instructional plans based on assessment results at least once a month.
- At least 80% of teachers and principals report that teachers use assessment data to identify students who need interventions at least once a week. Coaches' estimate of this teacher behavior is lower. About 27% of coaches report that teachers use assessment results to change instructional plans and identify students who need interventions only once or twice a month.

Stakeholders were also asked to assess the consistency of teacher use of assessment data. See Table 14 below:

Table 14. Stakeholder Assessment of Use of Assessment Data

Assessment Practices	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
Teachers use assessment data to guide instruction	0%	1%	1%	4%	55%	40%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	0%	1%	7%	48%	43%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	2%	36%	62%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	4%	44%	52%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- Almost all stakeholders agree or strongly agree that teachers use assessment data to guide instruction.
- Only one percent of teachers disagree that the majority of teachers in their school use assessment data to guide instruction.
- The 2007-08 results are very similar to those found in 2005-06 and 2006-07.

Site Visits and District Representative Interviews

Site visit interviews and observations generally confirm findings from district representatives. During interviews it was found that:

- **Schools and their personnel are continuing to become stronger and more confident in their use of data in guiding their instruction.** Teachers state that they appreciate being able to use the data to pinpoint areas of weakness with students and they are increasingly relying on assessments to assist them with ascertaining where knowledge gaps are occurring with their students.
- **Teachers and district representatives appreciate being able to utilize the Palm technology with cohort three schools reported that teachers are comfortable with assessment data.** After the first year of implementation, cohort three teachers administer assessments but report a lack of time and training to “dig into” data. It was reported that most teachers use assessment data but could benefit from more training on how to utilize the data to the fullest extent.
- **Growing numbers of teachers are using assessment data to guide instruction.** Again this year, teachers spoke fluently and enthusiastically about specific classroom strategies that were guided by assessment data. They report using data to guide identification of students for small group instruction or intervention groups. Teachers seem less confident in using data to guide whole group instruction.
- **While coaches continue to be the leader in most schools with respect to interpreting data, increasing numbers of teachers are taking on greater**

ownership of the assessment results. In the site visits many teachers and coaches stated that teachers are becoming more interested in their data and are taking on more active roles with respect to interpreting the results. School staff members also talk about data teams within their schools. These teams often are made up of a teacher representative from each grade who takes on more responsibility in interpreting the data and discussing what the results mean for the other teachers in their grade. While coaches continue to serve as a valuable resource and have a high level of comfort with interpreting the data, teachers are improving their capacity and understanding of the how to use assessment data.

- **Teachers discuss the integration of multiple forms of classroom assessment with DIBELS.** Teachers continue to display a heightened awareness of the use and importance of assessments. While the majority of teachers continue to rely heavily on DIBELS results, many supplement DIBELS with additional assessments to inform their classroom instruction.
- **Some schools posted anonymous aggregated data in public spaces so that parents and others could see the results of their assessments.** Stakeholders reported that students often gain increased understanding of their own learning from seeing or even graphing their DIBELS results. Additionally, many stakeholders comment on the usefulness of such results in discussion with parents.

Flexible Groups and Reading Workstations

I am still working on differentiating, and I'm not doing it as much as I would like. I do have a number of different activities that allow me to have stations that are directly tied into the level of the learner like computer programs phonemic awareness, and fluency. I really have access to a lot of materials and eventually I would like to refine my stations. I also have a full time aide in my classroom and that really helps. She handles higher level stations and a retired teacher comes in one morning a week. Both are great. **Teacher**

This section on Flexible Groups and Reading Workstations will present data from on-line surveys, district representative surveys, and site visits. These stakeholders' responses provide feedback on the level of use of flexible grouping and reading workstations in classrooms. In addition, stakeholder responses from district representative interviews and site visits are presented using the "Levels of Use of Innovation" framework to assess implementation.

On-line surveys

In on-line surveys teachers, principals, and coaches were asked to gauge teachers' use of flexible grouping and reading workstations. Results of that survey are presented in Table 15 and summarized below.

Table 15. Stakeholder Assessment of Flexible Grouping and Reading Workstations

Flexible Groups and Reading Workstations	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Stakeholder
Teachers use flexible grouping during the 90 minute block	2%	1%	2%	8%	87%	K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	0%	2%	16%	82%	Principal
	0%	0%	4%	16%	80%	Coach
Teachers use reading work stations during the 90 minute block	3%	2%	1%	6%	88%	K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	0%	4%	7%	89%	Principal
	0%	0%	2%	8%	91%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- Ninety-five to ninety-eight percent of coaches, teachers, and principals report that flexible grouping and reading workstations are used at least once a week during the 90 minute reading block. The majority of stakeholders agree that flexible grouping and reading workstations are used every day or almost every day. These findings are similar to those of 2005-06 and 2006-07.
- As compared to 2006-07, coaches report that teachers are more likely to use flexible grouping and work stations in the 90 minute block every day or almost every day.

Site visits and District Representative Interviews

During site visits and district representative interviews, stakeholders were asked to assess the level of implementation of flexible grouping and reading workstations. From these data it can be seen:

- **Stakeholders spoke fluently about RF classroom practice.** More stakeholders continue to speak clearly about classroom practice. In interviews, teachers often used specific classroom situations or strategies as examples to specific questions. These data indicate that while implementation is not uniform, as compared to earlier years, many, many more stakeholders are aware of and actively implementing flexible grouping and reading workstations.
- **Teachers across the cohorts use DIBELS results to guide small group placement and instruction.** There continues to be growth among stakeholders and improved use of data to guide small group placement.
- **Many teachers and stakeholders report that their new core has helped them design and implement appropriate workstations.** While many teachers and coaches reported that adjusting to a new core reading series has been a challenge during whole group instruction, when the new core also provided workstation materials, teachers reported that this component was appreciated and assisted them with the development of appropriate work stations.
- **Resistance to the creation of reading workstations is scarce and teachers are reporting success in utilizing this strategy.** Teachers in several schools stated that they work with other teachers in their grade to develop activities for their workstations. This approach maximizes planning time and adds to a sense of cohesion and shared resources among teachers.
- **Cohort three schools continue to lag behind cohort one and two schools in feeling at ease with flexible grouping, but they are implementing flexible grouping at varying levels.** In their second year of implementation cohort three schools are on board with the use of workstations, but there continues to be some uneasiness and lack of confidence among teachers in these schools.
- **There is wide variation in the quality of flexible group time.** While nearly all teachers report implementing flexible group time and workstations, it is difficult to establish the extent to which workstations are differentiated to meet student needs and the frequency with which groups are reorganized based on student skill. Some schools reported changing groups based on assessments daily, weekly, monthly, or only after benchmarking. There is great variation in teacher flexibility; some teachers reexamine student needs only as directed by the coach while on the other hand, some state that they are adapting material and strategies to students needs daily.

Interventions and the Role of the Interventionist

Well, with those interventions (have had a significant impact on the way RF has impacted how we teach reading). I mean they are doing those interventions. They understand the importance of it. Those kids are getting that additional time. They're following a very systematic and clear approach to the teaching. So they're really utilizing their support staff in a much stronger way, in a way that will actually help kids. Instead of just help teachers, they help kids. And so kids are getting those interventions. Kids are talking about reading themselves and about moving forward. You can easily walk up to one of those Reading First kids and say, "Hey, how's your reading going," and you talk about dibbles, and how the scores are getting better, and they've improved, and this still have this to go. They're not intimidated by the interventions. It's all just working very well I think. **District Representative**

This section on the Interventions and the Role of the Interventionist will present data from on-line surveys, district representative surveys, and site visits. First, demographic data from on-line surveys will be used to establish the identity of the interventionists who work to implement the RF initiative. Second, interventionist responses to on-line surveys will be examined to better understand their time use. Third, other stakeholder responses about the frequency and logistics of interventions are presented. Finally, district representative and site visit interviews are presented related to how interventions are organized, scheduled, and staffed.

Interventionists and other teachers involved in RF

As summarized in the methodology section of this report, the stakeholders who responded to the interventionist on-line survey had varied job descriptions. Of the 81 teachers who responded to the survey:

- 52% (n=43) are RF interventionists or assistants
- 39% (n=33) are Title 1 teachers
- 9% (n=7) are special education teachers
- 7% (n=6) are ESL/ELL/ENL teachers
- 1% (n=1) are resource teachers
- 6% (n=5) indicated other roles (e.g. Reading Recovery, curriculum facilitator, special intervention teacher)

▪ Note: because some respondents reported more than one role totals equal more than 81

This year, as was found in 2005-06 and 2006-07, more interventionists had a job title that was specific to RF (e.g. RF interventionist or RF assistant). The total number of Title 1 teachers responding was similar to earlier years and there were fewer responses from special education teachers and teachers who reported their title as Reading Recovery or other teacher.

As was found in earlier years, RF interventionists are highly educated; over 80% of interventionists have obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher. However, the educational composition of the group of interventionists has changed; as compared to 2006-07, fewer interventionist respondents have obtained a Master's degree.

As was noted in 2006-07, the percentage of interventionists with multiple decades of educational experience continues to decrease and the percentage of those with less than two years' experience has increased. Twenty-five percent (20) of respondents have been a teacher for over 20 years; 23% (18) for 11-20 years; 20% (16) for six to ten years; 24% (19) for two to five years; and eight percent (6) for less than one year.

The majority of interventionists are in their first or first five years in their position. Thirty percent (24) have been in the position for less than one year. Forty-eight percent (38) have been in their current position from two to five years. Twenty-three percent (18) of respondents have been in their current position for over six years; nine percent (7) have served for six to ten years; eight percent (6) for 11-20 years; and six percent (5) for 20+ years.

On-line surveys

Interventionists were asked to describe their time use in the on-line survey. These data are presented in Table 16 below.

Table16. Interventionist Description of Time Use

Interventionists on Interventions	Never	Rarely (a few times a year)	Sometimes (once or twice a month)	Often (once or twice a week)	Very often (every day or almost everyday)
I work with regular classroom teachers to help identify students who need interventions	4%	11%	20%	31%	35%
I discuss student needs or progress with regular classroom teachers	0%	3%	24%	39%	35%
I personally conduct interventions with strategic students	5%	4%	3%	13%	76%
I personally conduct interventions with intensive students	1%	1%	5%	15%	78%
The RF coach models effective strategies for me	9%	18%	30%	24%	20%
The RF coach observes my practices	4%	24%	40%	18%	15%

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- As was found in earlier years, the most common activities for interventionists continue to be conducting interventions with intensive and strategic students. A total of 93% of interventionists in this sample conduct daily or weekly interventions with intensive students and 89% of these interventionists conduct daily or weekly interventions with strategic students.
- Compared to 2006-07, a smaller percentage of interventionists never conduct interventions with intensive and strategic students.
- In 2007-08, interventionists were slightly more likely to discuss student needs with teachers than help identify students who need interventions; 66% of interventionists report that they work with teachers to identify students who need interventions at least once a week and 74% of interventionists discuss student needs and progress with teachers at least once a week.
- As compared to 2006-07, interventionists report that coaches model effective strategies for with the same frequency. A total of 74% of interventionists report that coaches model for them at least once a month.
- The majority (73%) of interventionists are observed by coaches at least once a month. Compared to 2006-07 there continues to be a similar, but small, percentage of interventionists who report that they are never observed by the coach.

On-line surveys also offered stakeholder insight into intervention practice. These data are presented below in Table 17.

Table 17. Stakeholder Assessment of Intervention Use

Principal Practice	Never	Rarely (a few times a year)	Sometimes (once or twice a month)	Often (once or twice a week)	Very often (Every day or almost every day)	Stakeholder
Teachers conduct interventions with strategic students	4%	3%	8%	26%	59%	K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	0%	11%	24%	65%	Principal
	2%	6%	11%	29%	53%	Coach
Teachers conduct interventions with intensive students	4%	5%	7%	24%	59%	K-3 Teacher
						Interventionist
	0%	2%	11%	9%	78%	Principal
	0%	4%	11%	11%	75%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- More than 50% of all stakeholders estimate that teachers conduct interventions with strategic and intensive students almost every day. As was found in 2005-06, the majority of all stakeholders estimate that teachers conduct interventions with strategic students at least once a week.
- Coaches and principals report that teachers conduct interventions with intensive students more frequently than do teachers. A total of 75% of coaches report that teachers conduct interventions with intensive students almost daily, whereas 59% of teacher report that they conduct interventions with intensive students almost daily.
- In 2006-07 there was a small minority of principals and coaches who reported that teachers never conduct interventions with intensive students. This year there are no principals or coaches who believed that teachers never conducted interventions with intensive students although four percent of teachers reported never conducting interventions with intensive students.

In the on-line survey, stakeholders were also asked to report on intervention implementation for all teachers in their school. See Table 18 below:

Table 18. Stakeholder Assessment of Intervention Implementation

Interventions	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
The majority of teachers effectively implement interventions	0%	1%	1%	5%	56%	39%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	0%	4%	7%	51%	38%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	7%	38%	56%	Principal
	0%	0%	0%	9%	43%	48%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- At least 89% of all stakeholders agree or strongly agree that the majority of teachers effectively implement interventions. These findings are similar to those of 2005-06 and 2006-07.

Site visits and District Representative Interviews

Interviews were conducted with site visit stakeholders and district representatives. In these interviews, implementation of interventions was examined. Findings from these data are as follows:

- **As compared to earlier years, more students are being appropriately identified and provided interventions; however, there is room for improvement.** Teachers tend to state that their assessments are useful for identifying which interventions to

use with which children. Although more teachers are becoming more comfortable identifying the weaknesses of their students and using specific interventions to address the areas, there are many teachers who do not seem proficient at this process.

- **Some teachers admit that their current strategies for students who need intensive or strategic help are frustratingly inadequate.** Across all three cohorts, teachers and coaches feel that interventions are implemented on a “trial and error” basis. Some teachers indicate that they are confidently “experimenting” to find appropriate strategies to help students in need; however, many report feeling frustrated and pushed for time and resources.
- **Most schools report having personnel to assist with interventions.** Schools regularly make use of special education, ESL, and Title I teachers for interventions. Less frequently, community volunteers and retired teachers also assist. In most cases, teachers work with small groups or individuals with the assistance of a paraprofessional or other teacher.
- **Coaches continue to play a central role in interventions.** In some schools, coaches train and coordinate interventionists. In addition, they often directly oversee pull-out or push-in intervention schedules. Another large role of the coach is to select or recommend interventions for teachers. In some cases, coaches continue to analyze data and create intervention groups for teachers.
- **Although coaches report looking at data, teachers are analyzing data more than they have in previous years.** Many teachers reported using progress monitoring data to guide them when grouping students for instruction. In some instances, teachers and coaches meet together to look at data monthly. However, there are still schools in which coaches do the majority of data analysis independently.
- **Training on interventions continues to be an area that is cited as desirable for additional PD.** In general, teachers state that additional training on interventions would be helpful to them. Teachers can get frustrated when they do not feel like they have the appropriate tools or methods to help a student. Additional PD on interventions was cited as a way to help deal with this frustration.

Challenges

I would say the first year was the biggest challenge. We had to educate our staff, just getting used to a grant that we had to adhere to, make sure that we did adhere to everything that was in that grant, getting professional development for the staff. I think each year there have been challenges, but the challenges have not been as great as they were the first couple years.

Each year the challenges are somewhat different. You get one thing under your belt and you feel pretty comfortable with one arena, one area of it, whether it's the budgeting aspect or whether it's some professional development that you finally feel like we've got that. And then the next year the challenge becomes putting it into practice in the classroom. Now that our achievement is improving, it's getting stronger then that brings on new questions and it's just the changes in focus I think, each year as we grow through the process.

-- District Representative, Cohort 1

Lack of Time

In site visits, lack of time defined a major concern across teachers, interventionists, and administrators. Time concerns differ between cohorts. Cohort three schools seem less overwhelmed than they did last year. Given that they have had a second year of implementation, they seem to be learning how to manage their time with respect to the added demands associated with RF. Cohort one and two schools often discussed that they lacked the time to refine their instructional tools to meet the individualized needs of every student.

I have an aide and she is a huge help with developing the work stations and making sure that they are leveled. I know that the other teachers who don't have aides don't always have enough time to make sure that all of their stations have activities for the three separate levels. I honestly don't know if I could level all my stations if I didn't have my aide. There is only so much time in a day and unfortunately I sometimes have to make choices about which aspects of RF are most important to get accomplished in a particular day.

-- Teacher

Another common theme among school staff was that the requirements of Reading First (RF) make it difficult to meet their obligation to teach other subjects. Some expressed worry that other curricular areas are being neglected as a result of the 90 minute reading block and intervention times.

As a half day Kindergarten teacher I really have trouble teaching 90 minutes every day. There is too much to get done and there just isn't enough time usually.

-- Teacher

Mobility of Staff

In site visits, one commonly voiced concern was mobility, specifically of staff. Although mentioned in previous years, only once school cited student turnover as a challenge. Staff

turnover was cited as a challenge because new staff necessitated the need for intensive training and added resources. For example:

Well I think the real challenge is going to be the integration of new staff into veteran staff into what is now year five of the learning implementation. We have a new teacher at one of our elementary schools this year. We had a new teacher last year. They really play hectic to try to catch up with where the other staff members are.

-- Principal

Although not necessarily clearly articulated, turnover of trained staff is also a potential threat to the sustainability of RF once funding ends. Given that the professional development component of RF has been widely praised as an important and valuable tool for educating staff on the importance of SBRR, assessment, and individualized instruction, it seems likely that impact of that training will lessen as trained teachers continue to migrate and retire. One district representative touched on this issue:

I think one of the biggest challenges [to the sustainability of RF] for me is not about the money as much as it is about the focus and I'm concerned about change in administration as the leadership that is currently here might move on. That concerns me that the focus might shift or might wane or might get watered down. But I think as long as the people that are here continue to stay here, I think that this will definitely remain a focus and its sustainability will be a goal, even without the money, without the funds.

-- District Representative

Buy-In

Buy-in continues to be a concern for all RF schools. Cohort three schools in only their second year of implementation report somewhat greater difficulty with buy-in, but overall, lack of buy-in seems to be less of an issue as it has been in previous years. For example:

The biggest challenges have been having our teachers buy in to the value and then having the training and the constant reinforcement to do these things differently. The training it takes a lot of time. The reading program takes a lot of time. There are some new techniques and the testing, all the assessments with the palm pilots. That's a technology of it. It's buying in and doing all the aspects of the program as a routine.

Buy-in however is not only an issue for schools in their first few years of implementation. Schools in their fifth year also cited buy in as a continuing challenge among a minority of teachers. As compared to earlier years, there are fewer reports of stakeholders refusing to participate in implementation; rather, stakeholders comment on the fact that buy-in is improving. For example:

One of the initial challenges was helping teachers understand why it was a good idea and I'm very pleased to report that that is not as much of a challenge now. Teachers are sold on not necessarily Reading First as a canned program, but they are sold on

SVRR practices. The interventions have made a huge difference in our school and teachers are totally on board with many of the things that come with Reading First.
District Representative

Communication

Guidance and communication was cited as a concern among some of the schools visited. These challenges exist within schools, between schools in a district, and with the Department of Education. As compared to previous years, communication within schools is less of a challenge, while communication within districts and with the State can continue to be a challenge. Stakeholders reported that there has been some confusion in the past because of changing expectations and methods of communication. For example:

The other challenge has been the frustration of constant flux in expectations from the state. One month we were supposed to do it this way, the next month it was a memo of now it's this way. A lot of frustration. The preparing of the budget was a huge frustration and challenge. Once we were actually able to sit down face to face and talk to each other we were finally able to resolve the issues. **District Representative**

Successes

Well, especially with the special education, I think it's really helping because they are including the special Ed students in there and they're seeing some movement forward with those kids. So there are fewer kids being identified; and I think that's probably because in large part because of the fact that they're receiving the Reading First services along with all of the other kids. So we're getting fewer kids identified in special Ed because they're making it through their reading; and it's made a difference. **District Representative**

In site visit and district representative interviews, many concerns and challenges were expressed, but there were just as many celebrations and successes. Many successes mentioned in previous years have been repeated including: positive impact on the culture of the school, student growth, and teacher growth. In 2007-08 there were an increasing number of stakeholders who took pride in the growth they have seen in their schools and districts during the past several years. Additionally, professional development (PD), success in tailoring instruction to student needs, and excellent leadership were identified as tangible successes.

Change in School/District Culture and Leadership

Stakeholders in 2007-08, similarly to 2005-06 and 2006-07, had encouraging comments about the way Reading First (RF) encouraged collaboration and a positive school culture. A district representative stated:

I think the thing that helped us with the Reading First is that we have a lot of pride now in what we're doing. We're all doing it together and no question there are growing pains, but we're doing it together and we're seeing good results. We've really come together as a school of reading. We have good data. Our teachers are working harder at reading than I think they ever have. A lot of credit goes back on the results we've had to the way we've had consultants come in and help us. Our reading coach is so instrumental in keeping us going. **Superintendent**

Additionally, because of the clear goals and accountability of RF, schools and districts report more focus and commonality in their practice and administration. Stakeholders reported more cohesion at the district and school levels in 2006-07 in terms of instructional practice.

It is great to have a principal who really knows RF. It keeps us on our toes, but it also enhances the fidelity of the program. She believes in the program and believes in the teachers. **Teacher**

Student Growth

Many stakeholders reported gains in student achievement that they felt could directly be attributed to the RF initiative. Stakeholders commented frequently on the explicitness of instruction under RF as opposed to their former teaching practices. In addition, stakeholders noted more consistent growth in their student populations than had been seen prior to the implementation of RF. One district representative stated:

I think we have done a really good job of working with our lower students. We can now identify the weaknesses of low level readers and done a good job with concentrating on that. I think they've just had more time with them and they needed that. We have set aside more time to dedicate to reading and we are really seeing the pay off. **District Representative**

Additionally, some veteran schools have begun to see long term impact on their students' performance. A teacher reported:

Even if RF ended I think I would continue to use SBRR. I have seen it work now and I can't imagine going back to the way I used to do it. **Teacher**

Finally, as in earlier years, teachers report that their students have become more enthusiastic about reading as a result of the program. One coach stated:

Each month we do an oral reading tally across all classes, and to celebrate, they put Skittles in a big bucket to see how much students have improved in their reading skills over time. At the end, they get to split up the candy and eat them! The kids have a lot of fun and are motivated to improve their scores. **Coach**

Success in Tailoring Instruction to Student Needs

As discussed in the Changes in the Classroom section of this report, in most RF schools, a tightly scheduled, focused intervention program has been implemented. Additionally, teachers are using the data to pinpoint the specific needs of students rather than just assuming that they need to be referred for special education services. As one district representative summarized:

So I think that our instruction and the way we use our data have been areas of success. Now that we use DIBELS the kids have more data early on in their education and that helps us to determine what kids needs instructionally. Therefore, we haven't had the need, perhaps, to recommend some of these kids for special ed testing because we know another avenue. We know something else we need to try and we need to work on with those students before we get to that point. **District Representative**

Well, I just think that we look at data a lot more than we ever did before. You know, we are giving the dibbles, you've got the three data points during the year and you're constantly retesting the students that are falling below the AIM line. So I just think that we are looking at things in a much more critical way. We are backing up those decisions with data. And we don't even put any new program in the classroom unless it's been scientifically proven to be effective. So, that's a huge change. **District Representative**

Teacher Growth

In 2007-08, as in 2006-07, many stakeholders were excited about the changes that RF had made in the educational experience of teachers and students. One way stakeholders felt their educational practice had improved was the reliance on SBRR to inform instruction.

Over the past 5 years I have seen really big changes in the way the staff teaches reading at our school. I can see that they are using my suggestions to improve their practices and we all know that these practices work because they are based on SBRR.
Coach

I have noticed the language has changed with regard to when teachers are discussing student's progress or students who are struggling. The language is much more focused. It's much more to the point. It's not this child is really struggling. But they will say to me from the last progress monitoring, I see that this child is having trouble with this and this. They can be very exact which leads to more efficient interventions as well. **Coach**

Professional Development

The positive impact that PD has had on instructional practice was a theme among many stakeholders who were interviewed. PD was viewed in the current year as a vital predecessor to the success that many RF schools are now reporting among their students and faculty. Teachers and administrators are enthusiastic about PD coordinated to their local needs such as that provided by outside consultants and coaches. A district representative reported:

With RF funds and know-how, we were able to bring in outside consultants. Without RF, we would have had to use other funding or go without high quality staff development. Also, we've been able to develop instructional leaders at our Reading First schools. For our building level RF administrators, they've been able to focus more on some instructional practices instead of just management. One reason they have that time is that we are able to have a technical assistance person doing little walkthroughs to make sure that things that are happening during the 90 minute block. **District Representative**

Interim Findings on Impact

Over the past two years of RF, we have learned to use using data in new and useful ways. Recently we had a meeting about a child who was struggling and we were able to use his data to go back and understand where the child was. Now we can investigate the problem and provide possibilities and offer suggestions. They will talk with the coach and with me. We have a lot of informal conversations and we are actually able to use data to understand the possible issues. **Principal**

Over the past 5 years I have seen really big changes in the way the staff teaches reading at our school so I know that they are using my suggestions to improve their practices. **Coach**

In addition to assessing the progress of implementation, the RF evaluation seeks to assess the impact of RF on districts, schools, teachers, and students. Evaluation questions for this section are:

- Are there changes in teacher knowledge, skill, and classroom practice that can be attributed to RF?
- Are all K-3 students meeting or progressing toward their DIBELS Aimlines?
- Are RF schools successfully moving most of their students toward their DIBELS Aimlines?
- Are RF schools improving their students' English/Language Arts ISTEP scores?
- Are RF schools improving their students' Terra Nova Comprehension and Vocabulary scores?
- Are all students progressing in their reading skills at a similar rate?
- To what extent are aspects of RF spreading beyond K-3 in participating schools?
- To what extent has RF had an impact on non-participating schools in RF districts?
- To what extent are teachers at non-RF schools participating in PD, changing practices, etc.?
- Has RF changed how teachers communicate student achievement to parents?

In this report, interim feedback on impact in these areas is presented. Table 19 shows what data were used to assess impact in each area.

Table 19. Relation of Area of Impact to Data Collection Method

Components of Principal Role	On-line Surveys	Site Visit Interviews	District Representative Interviews	Assessment Data
Perceptions of Student Impact	*	*		
Perceptions of Teacher Change	*	*	*	
School-level ISTEP Change		*		*
DIBELS and Terra Nova				*
Upper Elementary Changes		*	*	
Non RF School Changes	*		*	
Parent Involvement		*		
Perceptions of Impact on ESL and Special Education	*	*	*	

In this section, the first area of impact to be assessed will be Stakeholder Perception of Teacher and Student Impact. This section includes RF impact on teacher development, stakeholder perception of RF impact on students, discussion of parent involvement changes with RF, and perceptions of RF impact on ESL students.

The following section begins with Change in ISTEP+, Terra Nova Cat, and DIBELS Data Over Time. In this analysis, trends in student achievement on the ISTEP+, Terra Nova Cat, and DIBELS assessments are presented.

Finally, stakeholder feedback on upper elementary changes within RF schools and impact on non-RF schools will be presented. In addition, findings on sustainability will be presented.

Stakeholder Perception of Teacher and Student Impact

Stakeholder perception of teacher and student impact was assessed through on-line surveys, site visit and district representative interviews. Data from on-line surveys will be presented first, followed by data from site visit and district representative interviews.

On-line surveys

On-line surveys were completed by teachers, interventionists, coaches, and principals. All stakeholders were asked to assess the impact of RF on many aspects of teacher knowledge and practice as well as student achievement. Perceptions of teacher change are presented followed by perceptions of student change. These data are presented below. See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively, for copies of the coach, teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys.

Table 20 presents K-3 teacher and interventionist answers to whether RF increased their knowledge in the following areas:

Table 20. Stakeholder Perception of RF Impact

Stakeholder perception of RF impact on	No increase or change	Minor increase or change	Moderate increase or change	Significant increase or change	Stakeholder
Knowledge of SBRR	2%	8%	35%	55%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	9%	28%	63%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Knowledge of Core Reading Program	2%	6%	38%	55%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	8%	45%	45%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Knowledge of DIBELS	0%	2%	14%	84%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	3%	20%	75%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Knowledge of Other Reading Assessments	6%	16%	42%	37%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	18%	40%	40%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Knowledge of Reading Interventions	0%	6%	27%	67%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	1%	15%	81%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Knowledge to Use	0%	6%	29%	65%	K-3 Teacher

Stakeholder perception of RF impact on	No increase or change	Minor increase or change	Moderate increase or change	Significant increase or change	Stakeholder
Data to Guide Instruction	1%	6%	24%	68%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Practice Related to Reading Curriculum Content	2%	9%	36%	54%	K-3 Teacher
	6%	9%	39%	46%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Practice Related to Instructional Methods Employed	1%	6%	37%	57%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	7%	30%	61%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Practice Related to Student Assessment Use	2%	3%	31%	65%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	5%	25%	67%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Practice Related to Types of Interventions Used	1%	5%	25%	69%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	4%	27%	68%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Practice Related to Frequency of Interventions	2%	5%	19%	75%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	6%	17%	76%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Practice Related to Use of Flexible Grouping	4%	10%	31%	56%	K-3 Teacher
	6%	6%	41%	46%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Practice Related to Use of Data to Guide Instruction	2%	7%	32%	60%	K-3 Teacher
	5%	5%	27%	63%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach
Practice Related to Use of SBRR	2%	7%	35%	55%	K-3 Teacher
	3%	9%	32%	57%	Interventionist
					Principal

Stakeholder perception of RF impact on	No increase or change	Minor increase or change	Moderate increase or change	Significant increase or change	Stakeholder
					Coach
Practice Related to Use of Core Reading Program	7%	10%	32%	51%	K-3 Teacher
	10%	7%	41%	41%	Interventionist
					Principal
					Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- The vast majority of teachers reported a moderate to significant increase in skill or a change in practice in all skill and knowledge areas; teachers and interventionists report growth similar to that in 2005-06 and in 2006-07
- Areas where over 90% of teachers and interventionists report moderate to significant growth or increase include: knowledge of SBRR, knowledge of core reading program, knowledge of DIBELS, knowledge of reading interventions, knowledge to use data to guide instruction practice related to instructional methods employed, practice related to student assessment use, and practice related to intervention use and frequency
- For the first year, there was only one area in which seven or more percent of teachers and interventionists reported no increase or change in skill. This area was practice related to use of core reading program
- At least 75% of teachers and interventionists report significant change in their knowledge of DIBELS and significant change in their practice related to the frequency of interventions.

In Table 21 below, all school stakeholders were asked to assess RF's impact in the following areas throughout their school:

Table 21. Stakeholder Perception of RF Impact on Practice

Stakeholder perception of RF impact	No Increase or Change	Minor increase or change	Moderate increase or change	Significant increase or change	Stakeholder
Teachers' Knowledge	1%	7%	31%	61%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	8%	30%	63%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	24%	76%	Principal
	0%	2%	17%	82%	Coach
Teachers' Skills	1%	7%	39%	54%	K-3 Teacher

Stakeholder perception of RF impact	No Increase or Change	Minor increase or change	Moderate increase or change	Significant increase or change	Stakeholder
	0%	6%	36%	58%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	24%	76%	Principal
	0%	6%	19%	76%	Coach
Teachers' Practices in the Classroom	0%	5%	29%	66%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	4%	42%	54%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	20%	80%	Principal
	0%	0%	24%	76%	Coach
The Way Reading is Taught in Your School	0%	3%	28%	68%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	1%	33%	66%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	13%	87%	Principal
	0%	0%	15%	85%	Coach
School Climate Related to Reading	0%	6%	38%	57%	K-3 Teacher
	0%	4%	43%	54%	Interventionist
	0%	2%	40%	58%	Principal
	0%	2%	32%	67%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- This year over 50% of all stakeholders reported significant change to improvement in all areas.
- At least a minor change is noted by stakeholders in every area except teachers' knowledge and teachers' skill. Only one percent of teachers reported not receiving any increase in knowledge or skill
- As was noted in last year's results, principals tend to be more positive than other stakeholders, however, there is notable agreement between stakeholders in changes in reading practice

Stakeholders were also asked to assess change in student achievement. See Table 22 below:

Table 22. Stakeholder Perception of RF Impact on Student Practice

Stakeholder perception of RF impact	No Increase or Change	Minor increase or change	Moderate increase or change	Significant increase or change	Stakeholder
Students' Reading	1%	7%	42%	50%	K-3 Teacher

Stakeholder perception of RF impact	No Increase or Change	Minor increase or change	Moderate increase or change	Significant increase or change	Stakeholder
Skills	1%	4%	38%	58%	Interventionist
	0%	2%	44%	53%	Principal
	0%	0%	41%	59%	Coach
Students' Test Scores	1%	10%	48%	41%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	8%	46%	45%	Interventionist
	2%	16%	49%	33%	Principal
	4%	9%	50%	37%	Coach
Reading Skills of "At Risk" Students	1%	9%	49%	40%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	14%	34%	51%	Interventionist
	2%	7%	40%	51%	Principal
	0%	7%	50%	43%	Coach
Reading Skills of Special Needs Students	3%	21%	51%	26%	K-3 Teacher
	4%	18%	41%	37%	Interventionist
	2%	13%	42%	42%	Principal
	2%	26%	54%	19%	Coach
Reading Skills of ELL Students	9%	18%	42%	31%	K-3 Teacher
	10%	19%	45%	25%	Interventionist
	5%	5%	45%	45%	Principal
	10%	12%	50%	28%	Coach
Reading Skills of Benchmark Students	3%	10%	49%	38%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	11%	43%	45%	Interventionist
	0%	9%	60%	31%	Principal
	0%	11%	55%	33%	Coach
Reading Skills of "Advanced/Gifted" Students	9%	12%	49%	31%	K-3 Teacher
	8%	20%	51%	22%	Interventionist
	0%	22%	58%	20%	Principal
	4%	22%	46%	28%	Coach
Special Education Referral Rates	17%	27%	36%	20%	K-3 Teacher
	10%	25%	42%	23%	Interventionist
	4%	20%	33%	42%	Principal
	8%	32%	34%	26%	Coach
Grade Level Retention Rates	21%	27%	30%	23%	K-3 Teacher
	11%	27%	41%	22%	Interventionist
	14%	14%	41%	32%	Principal
	17%	26%	38%	19%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- More than half of all stakeholders feel that there has been a significant change in the reading skills of students. At least 80% of all stakeholders report moderate to significant increase or change in the following categories: students' reading skills, students' test scores, reading skills of "at risk" students and benchmark students' reading skills
- The largest percentage of stakeholders report no change or increase in the following categories: reading skills of ELL students, reading skills of "advanced/gifted" students, special education referral rates, and grade level retention rates. This is similar to 2006-07 results.
- As compared to 2006-07, Coaches were more likely to significant increase in the reading skills of Advanced/gifted students. With this change in response pattern, coach responses more closely agree with those of teachers and principals in 2007-08
- Stakeholders continue to assess change in "at risk" and benchmark students' reading skills similarly. More than 85% of all stakeholders report moderate to significant change in "at risk" and benchmark students' reading skills.
- As was noted in 2006-07, most stakeholders assess change in special needs students, ELL students, and "gifted" students as less dramatic than that of benchmark and "at risk" students
 - Almost three quarters of all stakeholders report moderate to significant change in reading skills of special needs students
 - As found in earlier years, over half of all stakeholders report moderate to significant change in reading skills of ELL students; however, 9% of teachers and 10% of coaches continue to report no increase or change.
 - As found in earlier years, over half of all stakeholders report moderate to significant change in reading skills of "advanced/gifted" students; however, 9% of teachers report no increase or change. As compared to 2006-07, coaches are more likely to report significant increase in the reading skills of "advanced/gifted" students and less likely to report no change or minor change
- While more than half of stakeholders report moderate to significant improvement in special education referral rates and grade level retention rates, 4-17% of stakeholders report no change

Site Visit and District Representative Interviews

During interviews, site visit stakeholders and district representatives gave their perceptions of RF impact in their school and district. They reported changes in teacher knowledge and practice, school culture, student achievement, parent involvement, and special education referral rates:

- **As was found in 2005-06 and 2006-07, teachers and other stakeholders continue to be very positive about RF.** While nearly all teachers comment on a decrease in time for instruction in writing, math, and other subjects, and some teachers feel that they have lost some creativity in their instruction, almost all teachers are certain that RF has helped their students' reading performance and has made them better literacy teachers. Administrators are also enthusiastic about the improvement in student achievement and teacher skill as well as the structure and example that RF has brought to their schools and districts.
- **Stakeholders report that the profound impact of RF comes from a focus on the use of assessment data to drive individual instruction and interventions.** Stakeholders overwhelmingly report that the 90 minute reading blocks, use of assessments, interventions, flexible groups and reading workstations, and PD to hone instructional skill and meet individual student needs have impacted their schools and students in a positive way. One Cohort 1 coach stated:
- **Stakeholders report that because of RF, their schools have a stronger focus on reading.** Specifically, most stakeholders reported increased cohesion between teachers and grade levels because there is a systematic sequence structure that has been put into place. Also, many administrators note that the influence of this structure has influenced their district as a whole.
- **Nearly all stakeholders reported that because of RF they have seen gains in student reading progress.** RF's impact on students with the increased acceptance of the model continues to be cited by stakeholders at all levels. When discussing assessment, the majority of stakeholders benchmarking cite DIBELS data, however, some also note impact of systematic reading instruction on ISTEP+ and Terra Nova performance. Many teachers reported that students are more excited and motivated about reading.
- **School climates have been greatly impacted by RF.** Across the board, schools continue to report that participating in RF has had a positive impact on their school. District representatives commonly cite a renewed level of professionalism a collegiality among staff of RF schools.
- **The impact on teachers' knowledge and skills continues to be noted by stakeholders on all levels.** Since a large component of RF is centered on PD, it is understandable that stakeholders would highlight this as an important impact of the program. Teachers themselves often commented on how much they have grown as professionals since taking part in the PD offered as a part of RF.

- **Some schools reported change in special education referral rates. There seem to be more stakeholders reporting improvement in the special education referral rates, but improvement in this area lags behind other areas of improvement noted by stakeholders.** Again this year, some stakeholders noted that Response to Intervention and the RF model work very well together.
- **RF impact on ELL is less clear.** The impact of RF on ELL continues to be unclear among stakeholders. While stakeholders noted that focused instruction and interventions aid ELL students in their English language skills, ELL teachers were not as central to the RF team as special education and Title I teachers. Additionally, some ELL teachers who had attended PD stated that there were few PD offerings focused on their special needs.

Change in ISTEP+, Terra Nova Cat and DIBELS Data over Time

RF schools measure student success with three quantitative assessments: ISTEP+ (Indiana Statewide Testing of Educational Progress Plus), Terra Nova Cat, and DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills). ISTEP+ and Terra Nova Cat serve as outcome measures of student reading comprehension and DIBELS serves as a measure of fluency.

RF schools report the number of students in third and fourth grade passing ISTEP+; the number of students in first and second grade passing Terra Nova Cat; and DIBELS scores for students from first to third grade. In addition to providing overall totals of students passing, data are disaggregated and total numbers of students passing are provided for the following categories of students: economically disadvantaged, special education, English as a second language, and ethnic groups (White, African American, Asian, Multiracial, Native American, and Hispanic).

ISTEP+ and Terra Nova Cat data have been collected by all participating RF schools since their baseline year in 2002-03 to 2007-08 and DIBELS data have been collected from 2003-04 to 2007-08. Graphs present average percent passing for all Reading First schools that reported data for ten or more students. Graphs represent schools in their fifth year of implementation. Graphs for all schools (fifth, fourth, third, and second years) can be found in Appendix E.

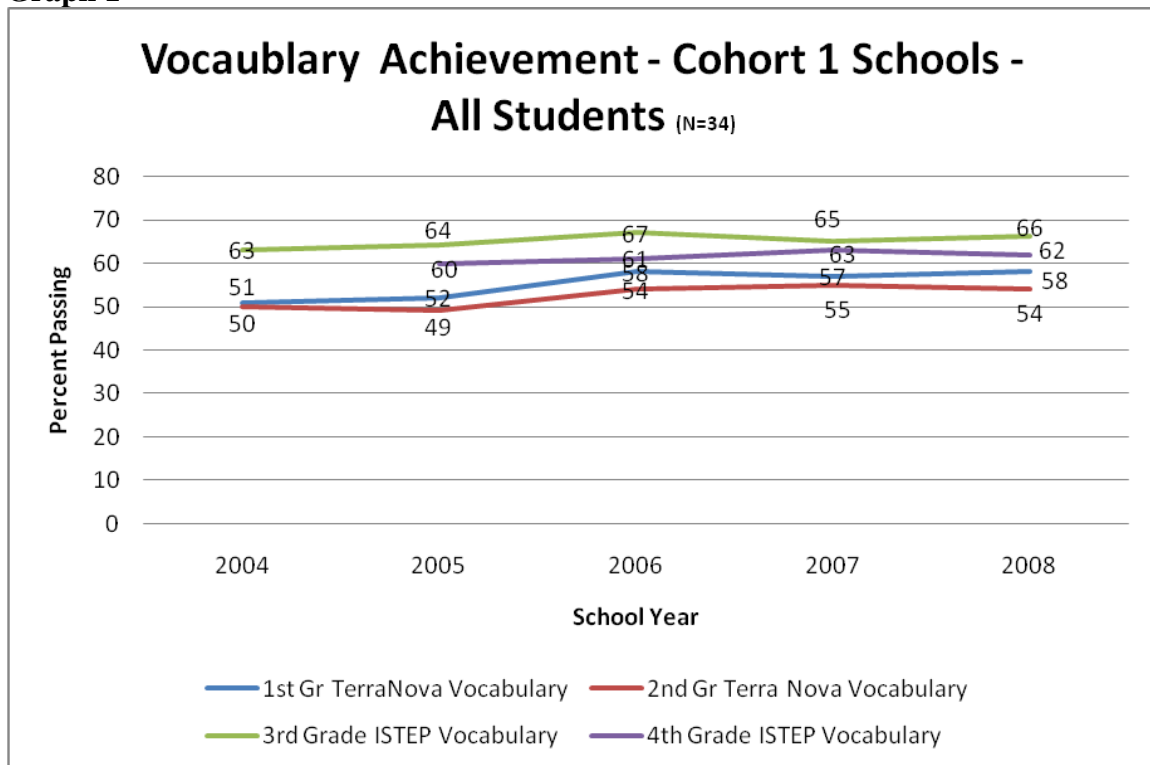
The following graphs present the change in the average percent of students passing each assessment for all RF schools in the state of Indiana. The first section of this chapter presents Change in Student Vocabulary and Comprehension as measured by ISTEP+ and Terra Nova Cat. The following section presents Change in Student Fluency as measured by DIBELS.

Change in Student Vocabulary and Comprehension

Student reading vocabulary and comprehension are measured with ISTEP+ scores for students in third and fourth grade and Terra Nova Cat scores for students in first and second grade.

Graph 1 shows the average percent of students who received a passing score on their vocabulary test in each grade level in all Reading First schools. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Vocabulary scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

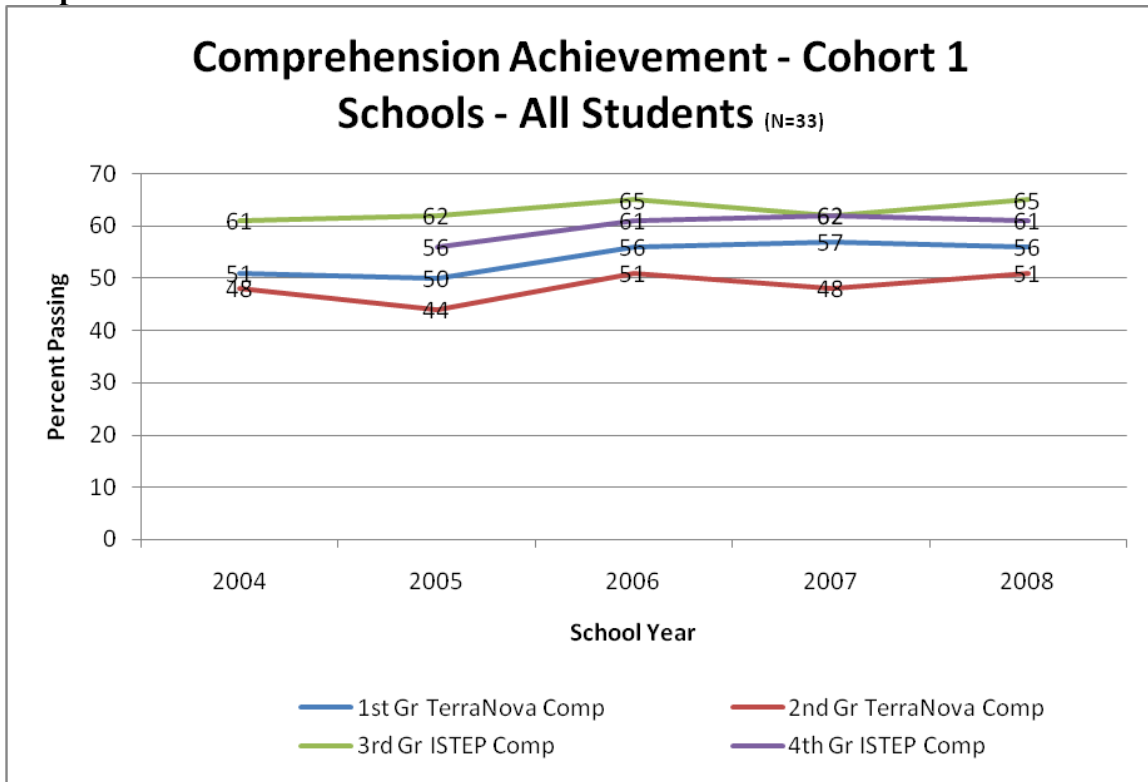
Graph 1



Graph 1 indicates that the average percent of students passing their vocabulary tests in all RF schools has remained relatively stable with notable overall growth in first grade (+7%). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Graph 2 shows the average percent of students who received a passing score on their comprehension test in each grade level in all Reading First schools. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Comprehension scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

Graph 2



Graph 2 indicates that the average percent of students passing their comprehension tests in all RF schools has remained relatively stable with notable overall growth in fourth and first grade (+5% in both groups). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

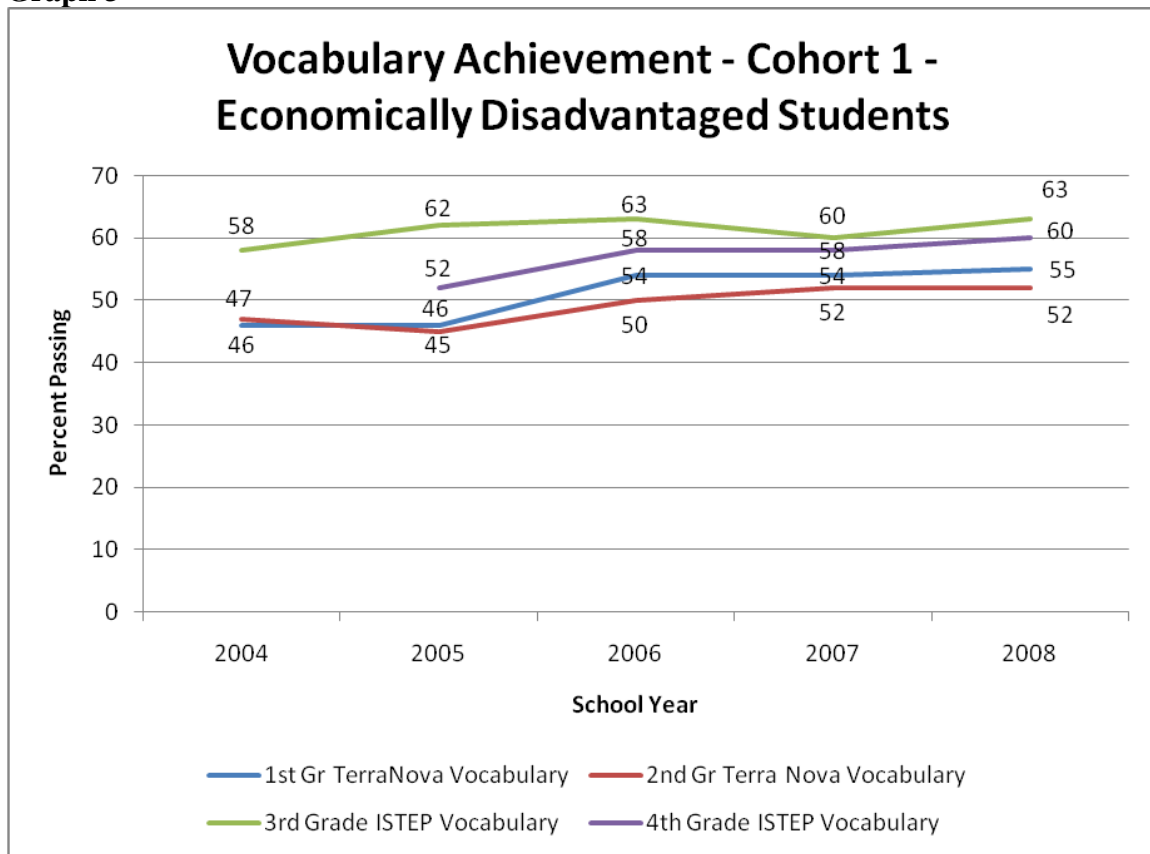
Change in Student Vocabulary and Comprehension—Student Subgroups

Economically Disadvantaged

In addition to reporting total numbers of students passing their comprehension or vocabulary assessment, RF schools report the students passing in important subgroups. The following graphs present the total percent of students in each subgroup who received a passing score on their comprehension or vocabulary test at each grade level.

Graph 3 shows the total percent of economically disadvantaged students who received a passing score on their vocabulary test at each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Vocabulary scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

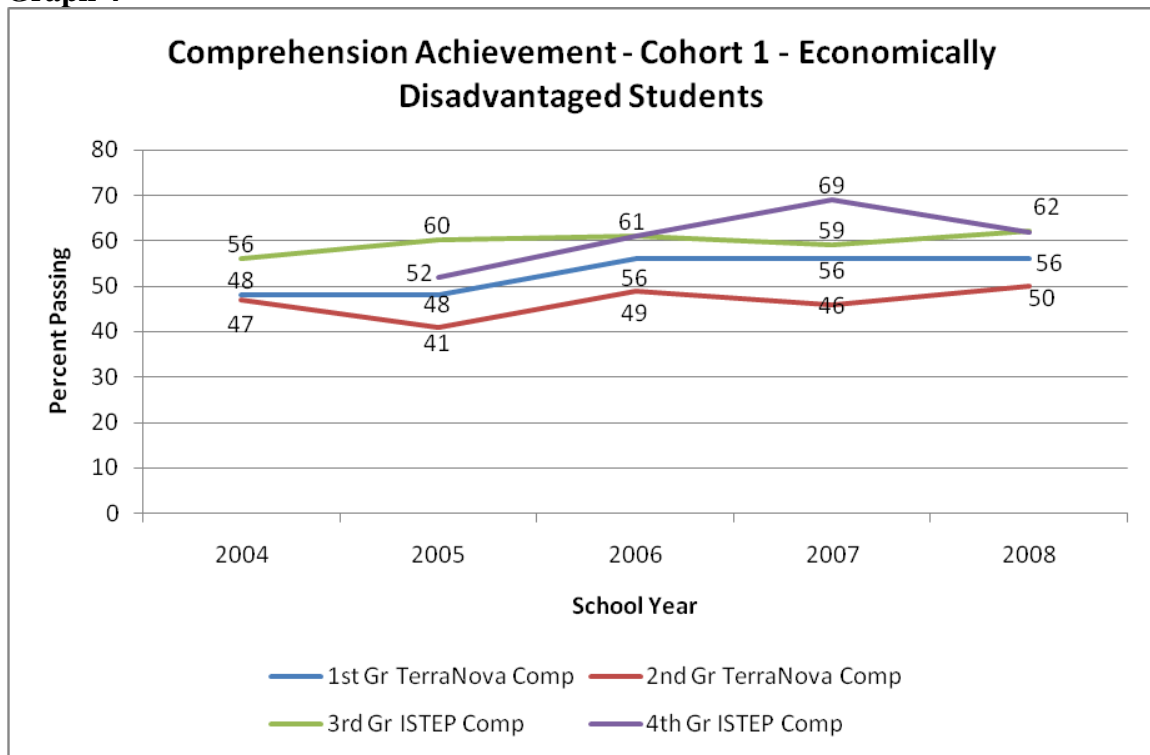
Graph 3



Graph 3 indicates that the average percent of students passing their vocabulary tests in all RF schools has remained relatively stable with notable overall growth in first and fourth grade (+7% and +9% respectively). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Graph 4 shows the total percent of economically disadvantaged students who received a passing score on their comprehension test at each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Comprehension scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

Graph 4

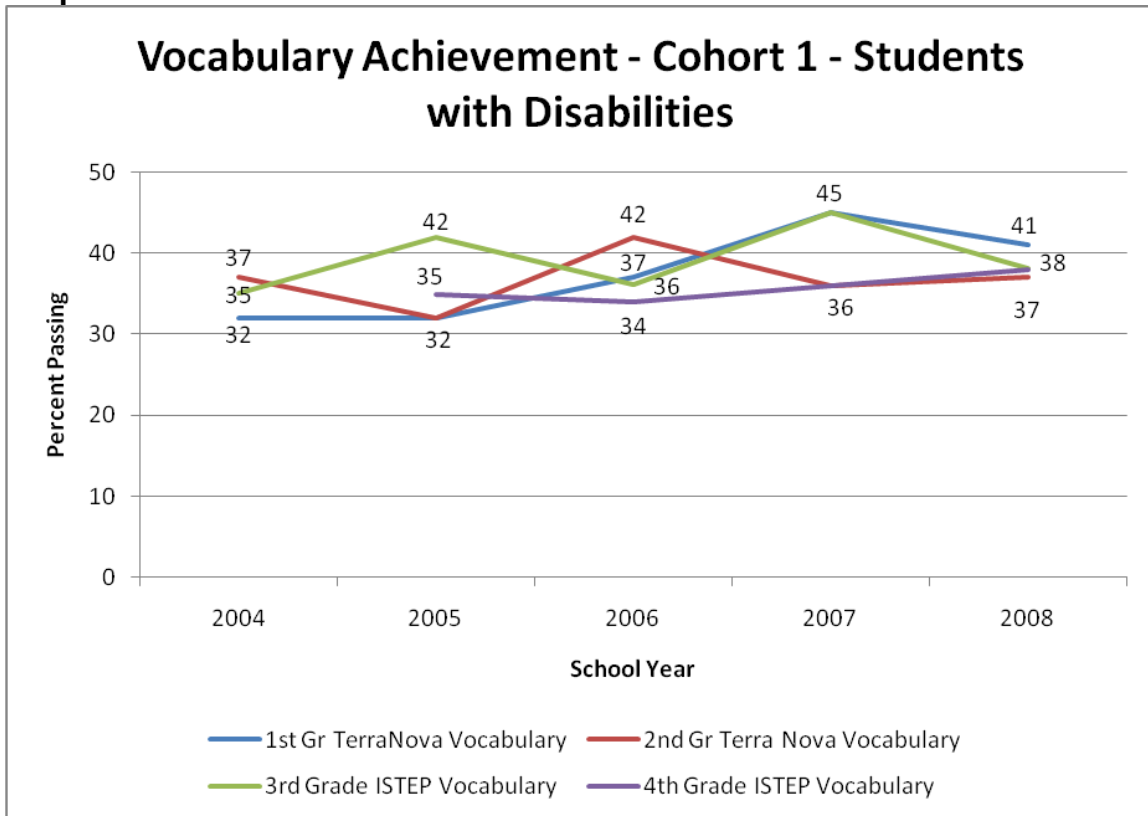


Graph 4 indicates that the average percent of students passing their comprehension tests in all RF schools has remained relatively stable with notable overall growth in fourth and first grade (+10% and +8% respectively). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Disabled Students

Graph 5 shows the total percent of disabled students who received a passing score on their vocabulary test in each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Vocabulary scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

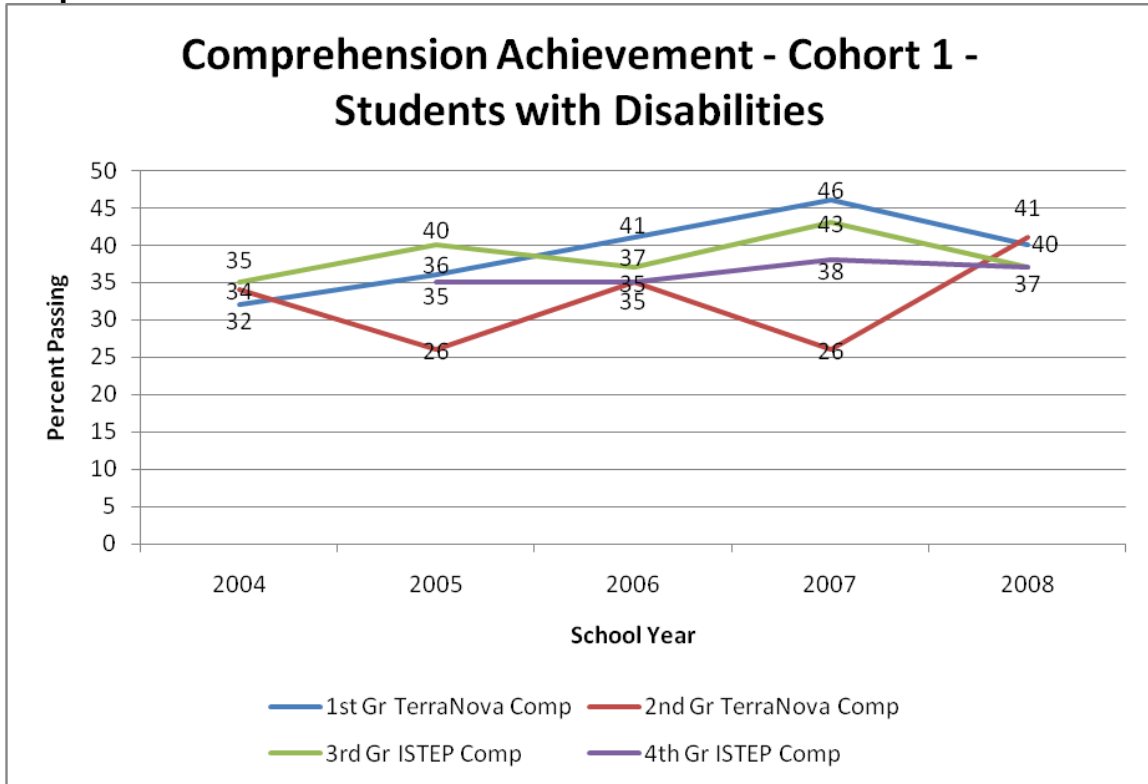
Graph 5



Graph 5 indicates that the average percent of students passing their vocabulary tests in all RF schools has remained relatively stable with notable overall growth in first grade (+9%). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Graph 6 shows the total percent of disabled students who received a passing score on their comprehension test in each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Comprehension scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

Graph 6

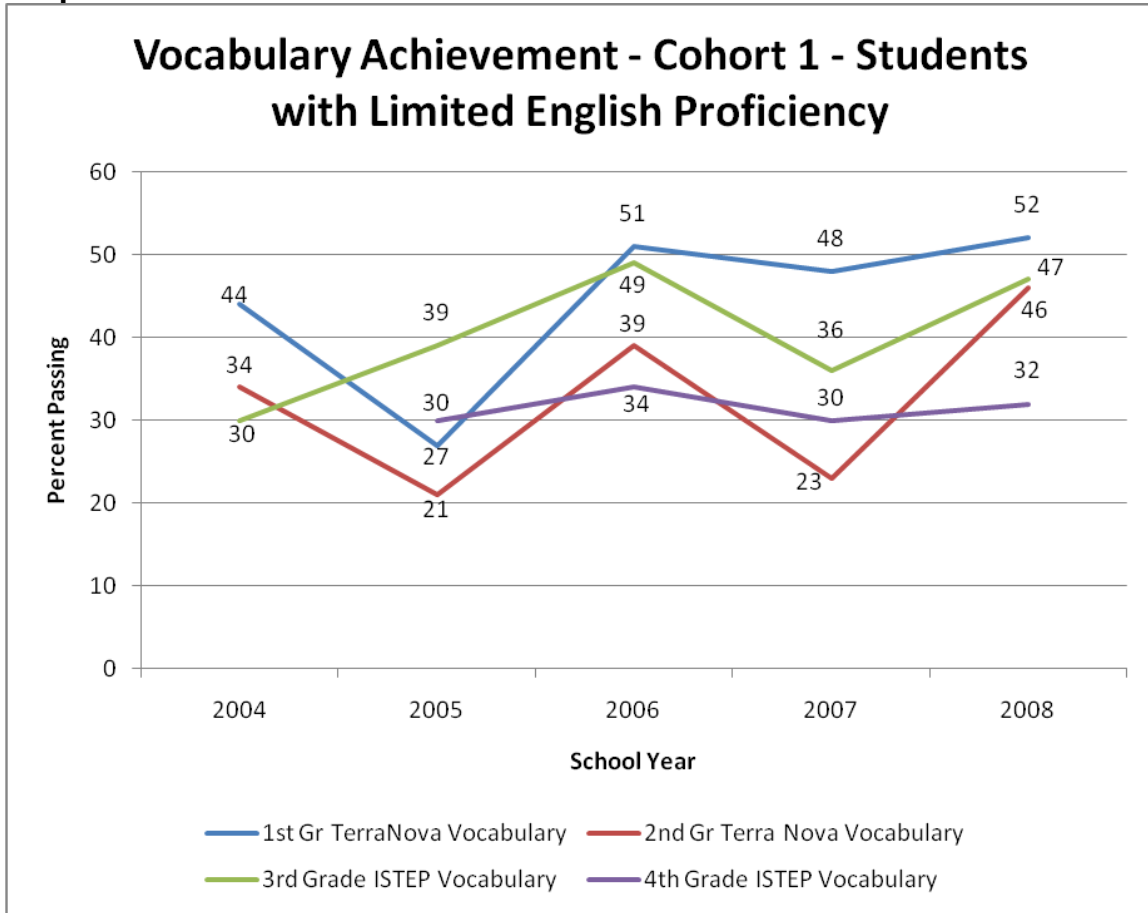


Graph 6 indicates that the average percent of students with disabilities students passing their comprehension tests in all RF schools has remained relatively stable with notable overall growth in first and second grade (+8% and +6% respectively). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Limited English Proficiency

Graph 7 shows the total percent of LEP students who received a passing score on their vocabulary test in each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Vocabulary scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

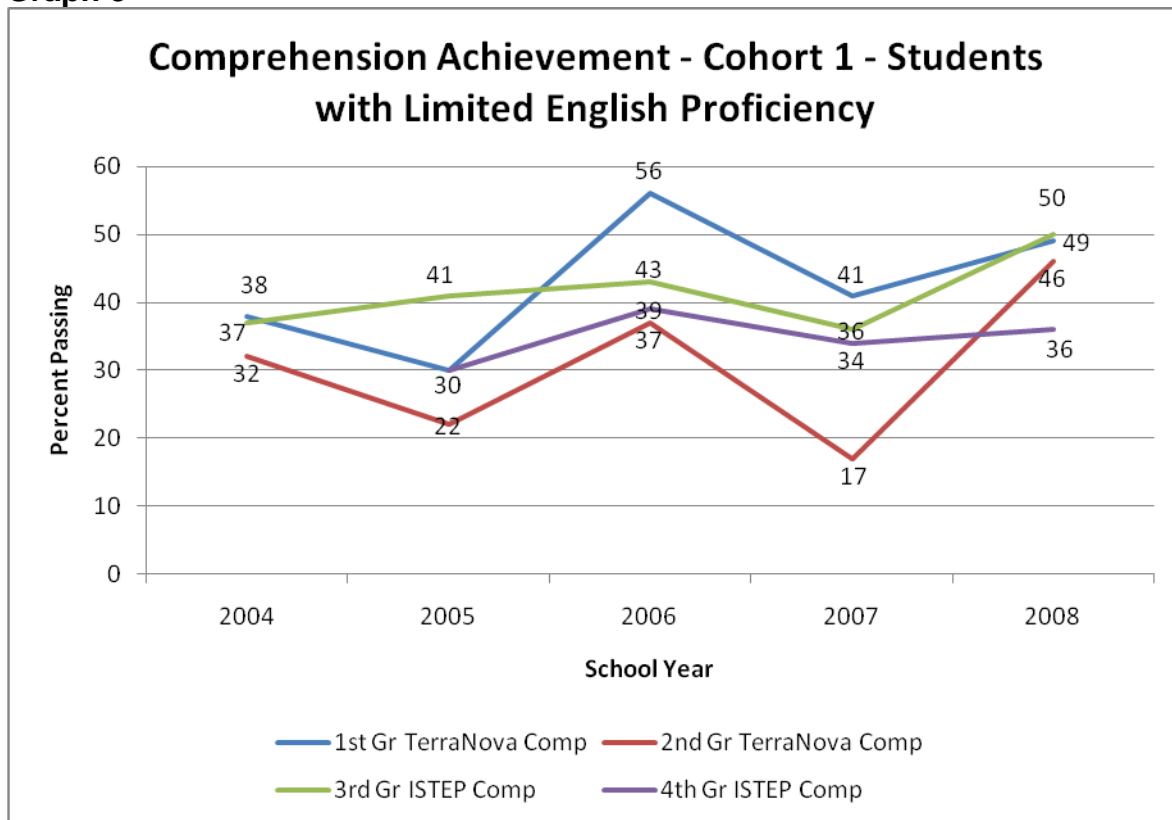
Graph 7



Graph 7 indicates that the average percent of LEP students passing their vocabulary tests in all RF schools has varied over time. However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Graph 8 shows the total percent of LEP students who received a passing score on their comprehension test in each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Comprehension scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

Graph 8

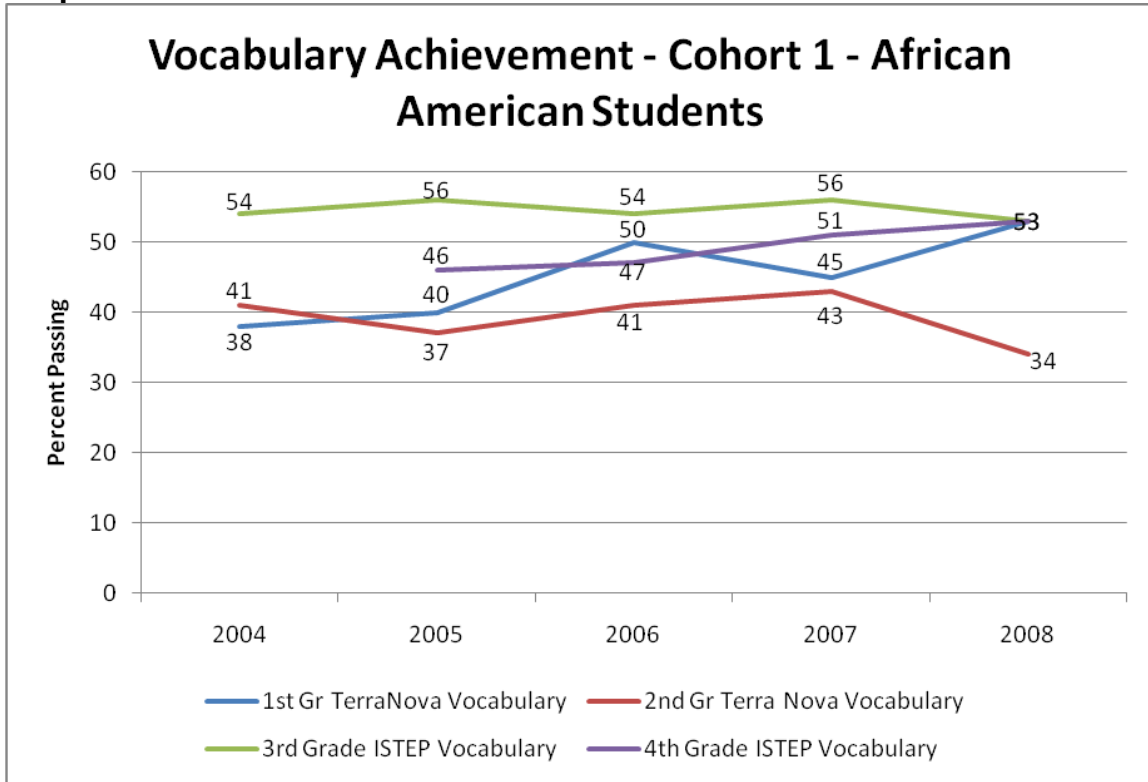


Graph 8 indicates that the average percent of students passing their comprehension tests in all RF schools has varied over time. However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

African American

Graph 9 shows the total percent of African American students who received a passing score on their vocabulary test in each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Vocabulary scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

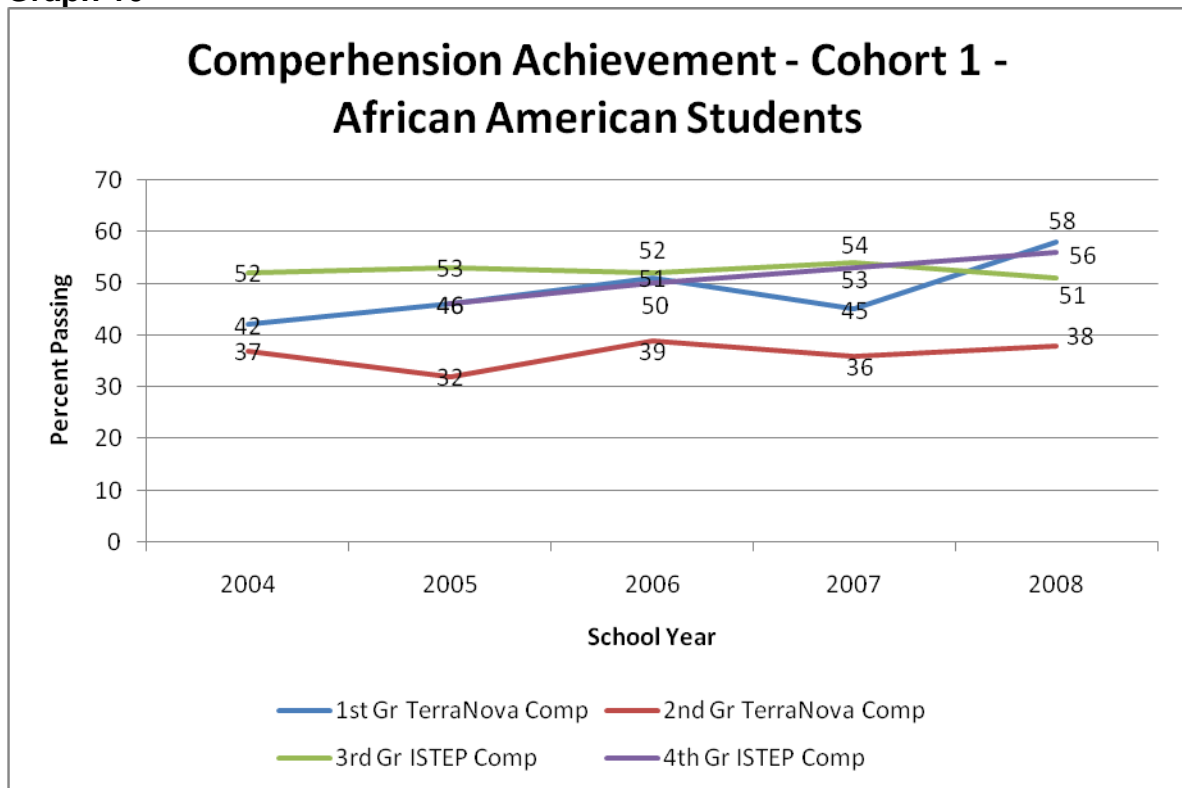
Graph 9



Graph 9 indicates that the average percent of students passing their vocabulary tests in all RF schools has remained relatively stable with notable overall growth in first grade (+15%). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Graph 10 shows the total percent of African American students who received a passing score on their comprehension test in each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Comprehension scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

Graph 10

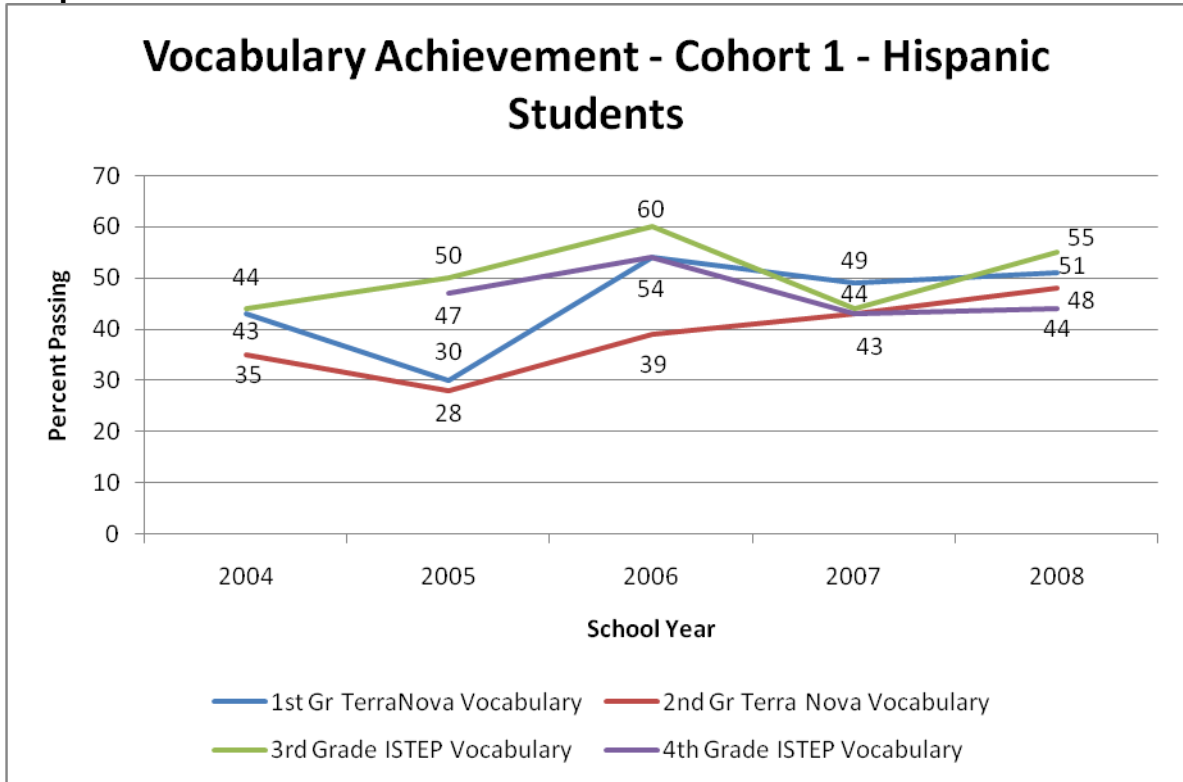


Graph 10 indicates that the average percent of students passing their comprehension tests in all RF schools has remained relatively stable with notable overall growth in fourth and first grades (+10% and 16% respectively). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Hispanic

Graph 11 shows the total percent of Hispanic students who received a passing score on their vocabulary test in each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Vocabulary scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

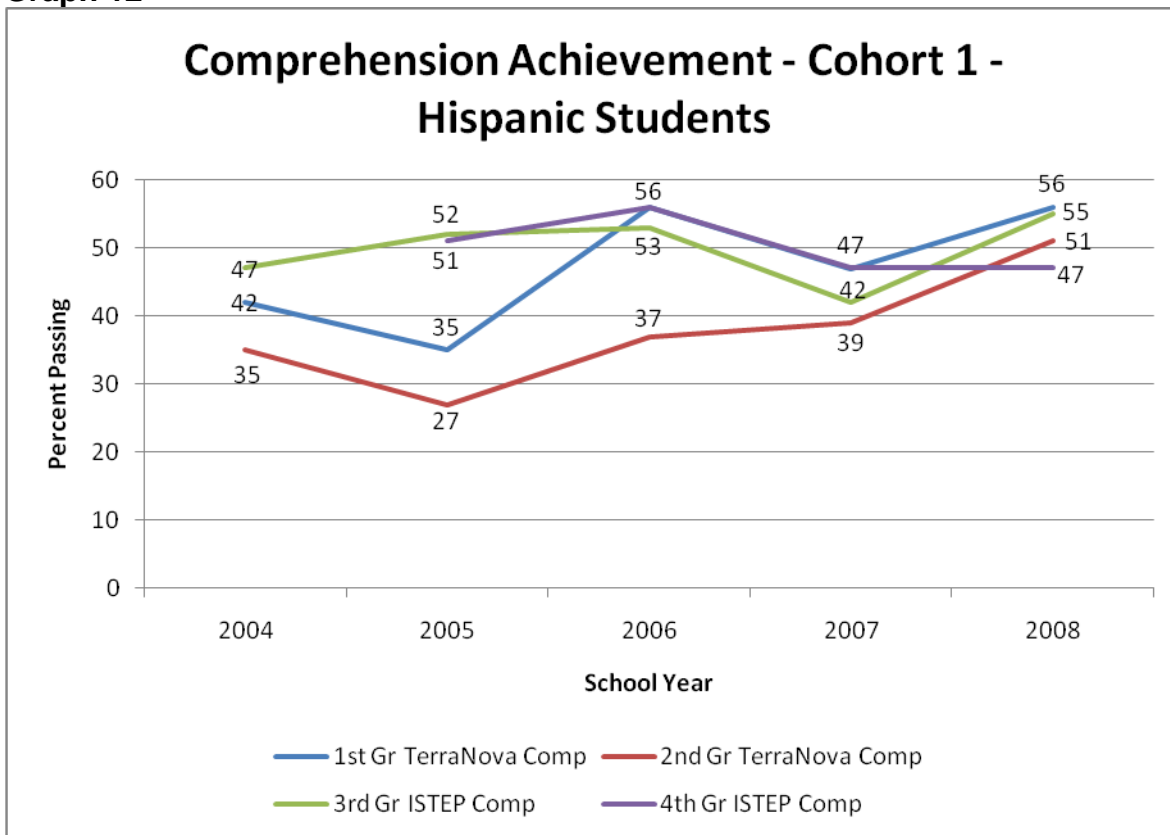
Graph 11



Graph 11 indicates that the average percent of students passing their vocabulary tests in all RF schools has varied over time with notable overall growth in second and third grade (+13% and +11% respectively). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Graph 12 shows the total percent of Hispanic students who received a passing score on their comprehension test in each grade level. Data are presented from 2003-04 through 2007-08. Comprehension scores for first and second grade are from Terra Nova Cat and ISTEP+ for third and fourth grade.

Graph 12



Graph 12 indicates that the average percent of students passing their comprehension tests in all RF schools has varied over time with notable overall growth in first and second grade (+14% and 16% respectively). However, percentages do not reflect changes for consistent cohorts of students. In addition, due to issues related to reporting of student data as well as student mobility, changes over time should be interpreted with caution.

Change in Student Fluency

Change in Student Fluency graphs provide feedback Reading First schools' impact on students who are consistent attendees. The graphs presented below follow the achievement of two cohorts of students over two years (either 5 or 6 testing periods). Students were included in the analysis only if their scores were available for all applicable testing periods.

Two cohorts of students were followed. Those that started in grade one in 2005-06 and those who started grade two in 2005-06. Grade one starters were tested with ORF at five periods MOY 2005-06 through EOY 2006-07. Grade two starters were tested with ORF at six periods BOY 2005-06 through EOY 2006-07.

Inferential analyses were conducted for each subgroup with reported scores for **more than 40** students who were consistent attendees over the 2005-06 and 2006-07 school years. If analyses were conducted the results can be found under each graph.

Change Over Time Calculations

Change in Student Fluency graphs are based on individual student performance. For each student, his/her median ORF score was subtracted from benchmark. This difference calculation was conducted for all consistent attendees. This score was labeled the difference score and represented how far each student was from benchmark; positive difference scores indicated that a student was above benchmark and negative difference scores indicated that a student was below benchmark.

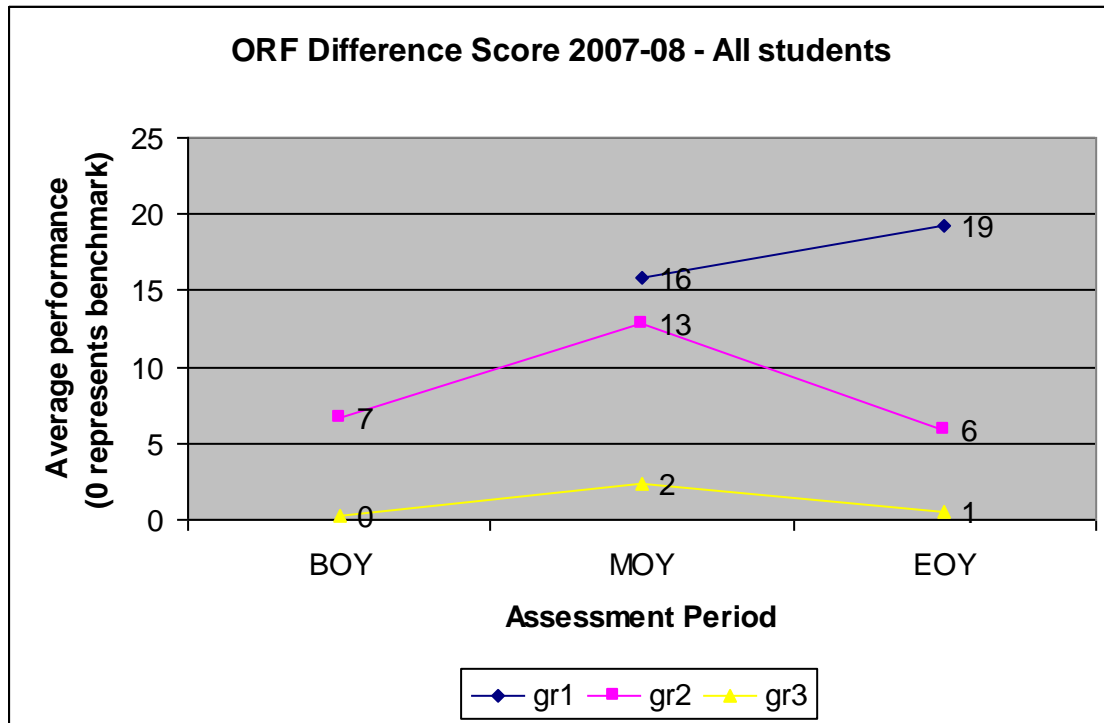
For example, at MOY in grade one, benchmark on ORF is 20. **Therefore, if a student has an ORF score of 32 their difference score would be +12. This student is 12 points above benchmark.**

After all difference scores were calculated, a mean was found for all students. This mean was standardized to make ORF scores comparable over time. This standardized value of average student distance from benchmark is found in the graphs below.

Please note that DIBELS ORF is not designed as an outcome measure, because of this as well as the low number of students represented in some graphs, these findings are most useful when viewed for general information on trends as opposed to outcomes assessments of reading success.

Graph 13 below indicates the average performance of students who have completed the DIBELS ORF during the 2007-08 school year.

Graph 13



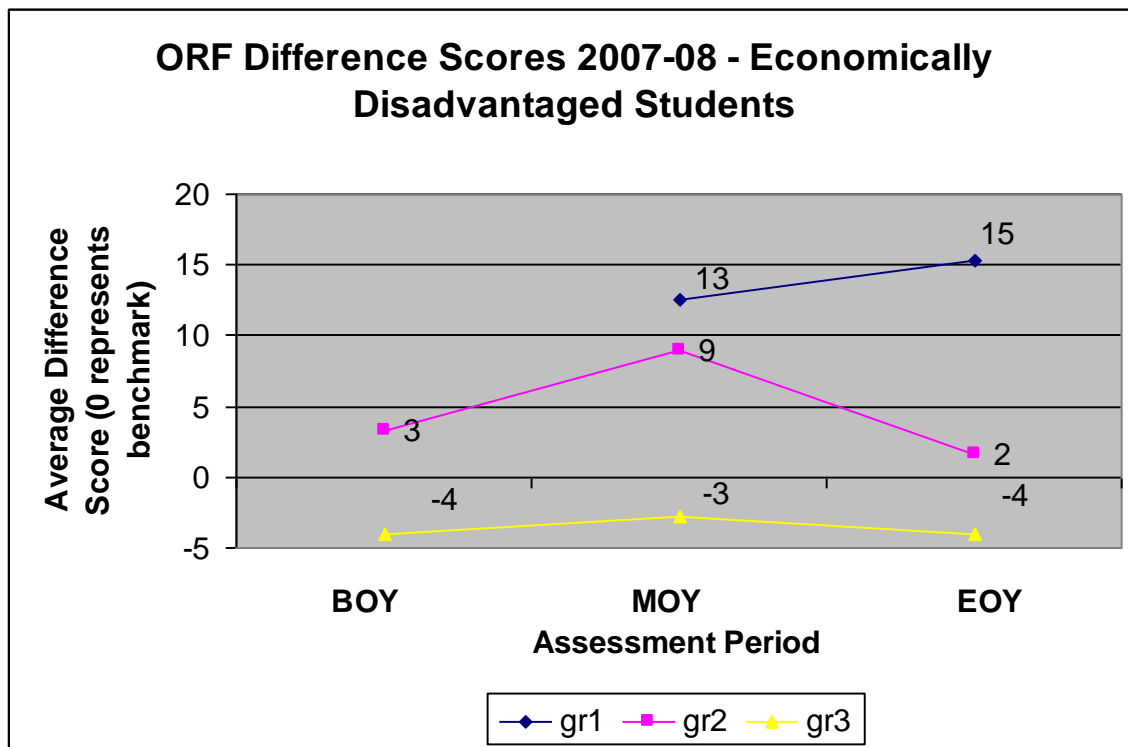
Graph 13 indicates that on average students began with performance at or above benchmark for their first ORF assessment period and increased their achievement as compared to benchmark in their second assessment period (MOY for second and third grade students, EOY for first grade students).

Change in Student Fluency—Student Subgroups

Economically Disadvantaged

Graph 14 below indicates the average performance of economically disadvantaged students on the ORF section of the DIBELS assessment during the 2007-08 academic year.

Graph 14

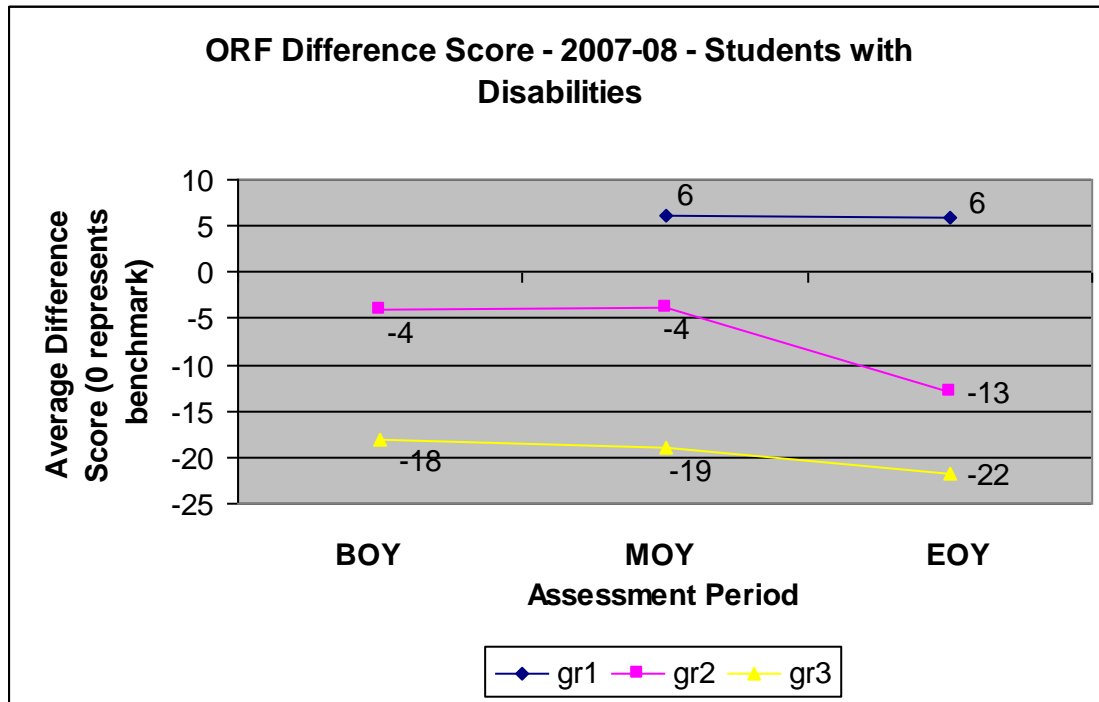


Graph 14 shows that on average, economically disadvantaged students tend to improve their ORF difference scores between their first and second assessment period. Although the first and second grade students on average perform above benchmark, economically disadvantaged students on average fail to meet the ORF benchmark on at each assessment period.

Special Education

Graph 15 below indicates the average performance of special education students on the ORF section of the DIBELS assessment during the 2007-08 academic year.

Graph 15

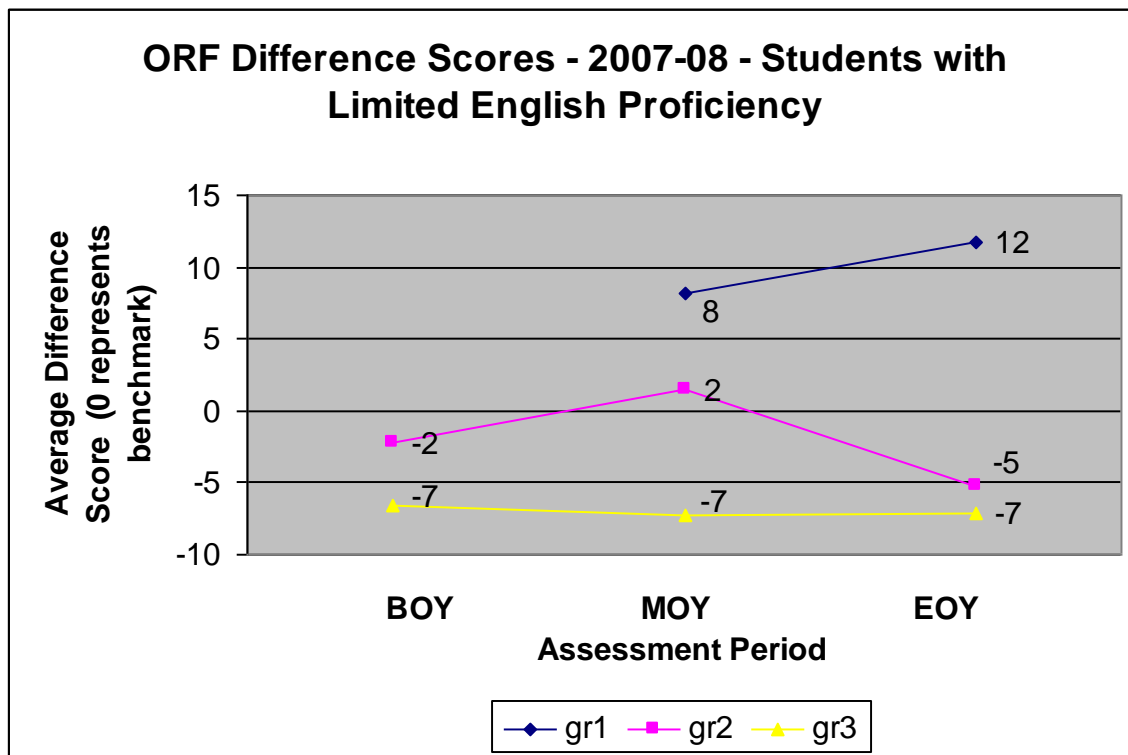


Graph 15 indicates that special education student performance in Second and Third grade is consistently below benchmark at all three assessment periods. Additionally, while student performance is relatively stable between the first and second assessment period, students' performance drops off substantially at the third assessment period.

English as a Second Language

Graph 16 below indicates the average ORF performance of students for whom English is a second language on the DIBELS assessment during the 2007-08 academic year.

Graph 16

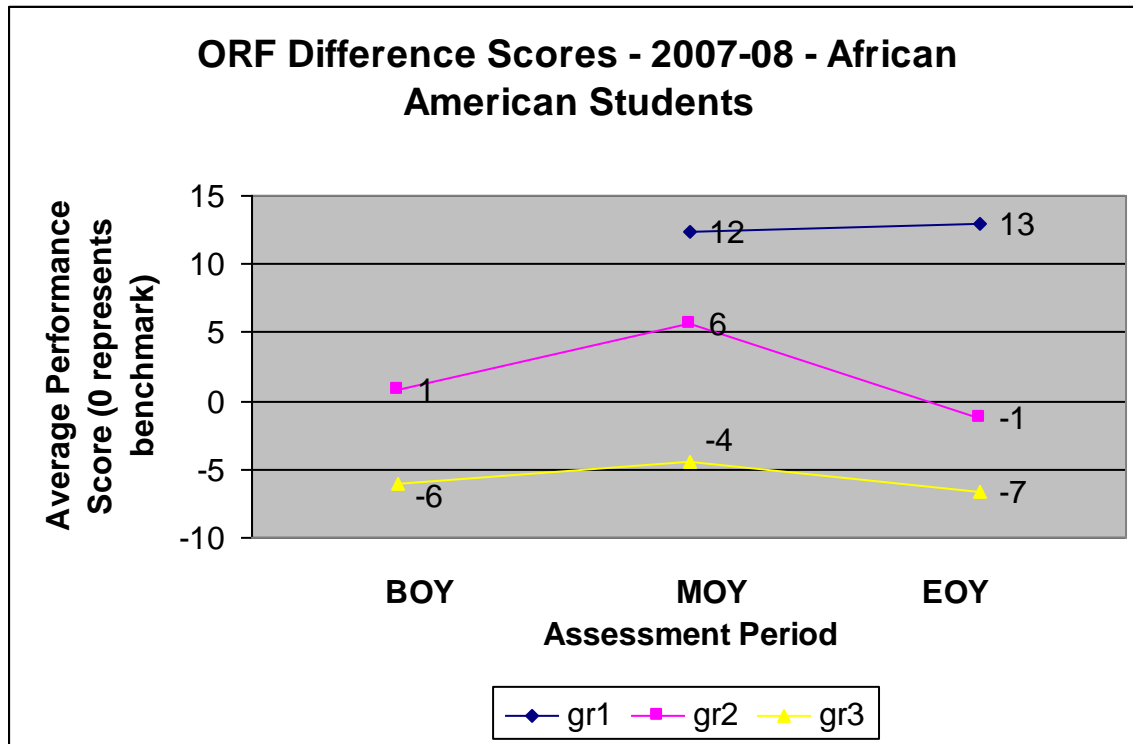


Graph 16 shows that LEP students tend to be stable or improve their ORF scores at their second assessment period although LEP students in second and third grade tend to perform below benchmark after their third assessment period.

Minority Groups

Graph 17 below indicates the average ORF performance of African American on the DIBELS assessment during the 2007-08 academic year.

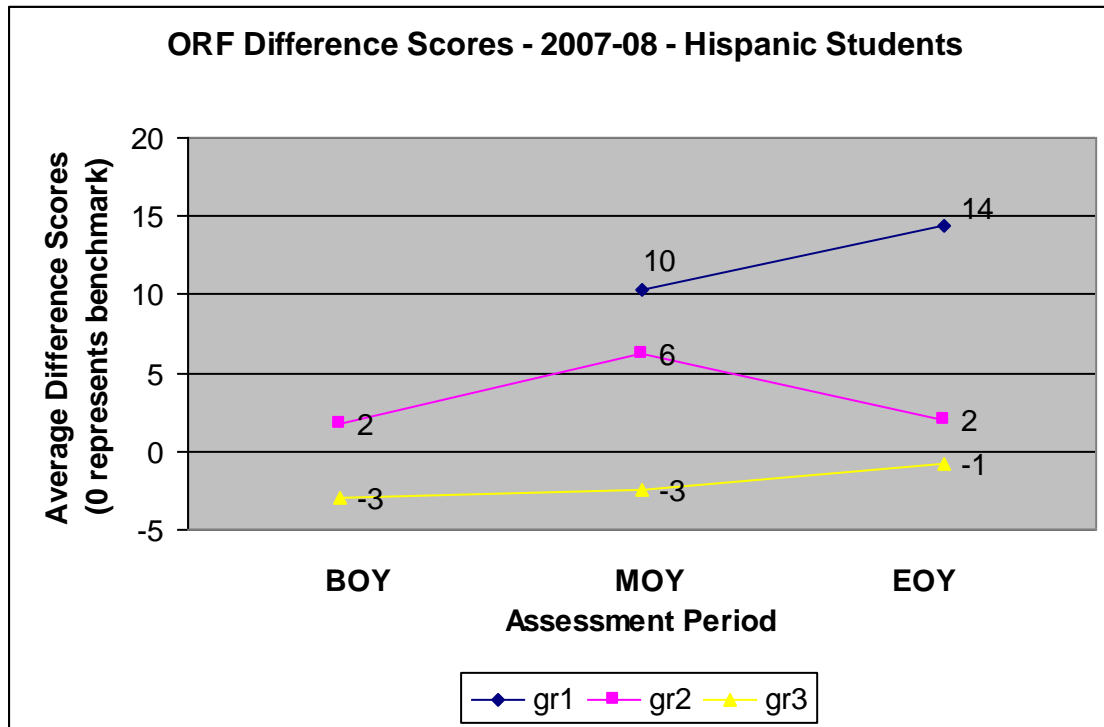
Graph 17



Graph 17 indicates that the average performance of African American students on ORF tends to improve or remain stable between their first and second assessment period. Also, the performance of African American students in second and third grade tends to be below benchmark at the third assessment period.

Graph 18 below indicates the average ORF performance of Hispanic students on the DIBELS assessment during the 2007-08 academic year.

Graph 18



Graph 18 shows that as with other subgroups, Hispanic students tend to maintain or improve their performance on the ORF section of DIBELS between the second and third assessment period.

Impact on Upper Elementary Grades and Non-Reading First Schools

What we've tried to do as of last school year is to start some implementation of Reading First in those fourth and fifth grade classrooms. They have all been trained on DIBELS. They give the assessments three times a year. And at this point in time, we are maintaining a full 60 minutes. We haven't gotten to 90 yet. But there's a full 60 minutes in grades four and five. So, they're benefiting from just being part of that whole cultural change in the buildings, being associated with Reading First.

District Representative

I don't see this huge gap (between the way reading is taught in RF schools and the way it is taught in non-RF schools) because we have invited the other people in and we've set similar expectations for them. I think in our non-Reading First buildings, as we get new people coming into the district, they maybe not had the same opportunities. When we have a new teacher coming into a Reading First building, then we have the coach there and we have all the people who have participated and they're there to act as a support system for that teacher. In the non-Reading First buildings, that's been a little bit trickier, but I don't see a huge, huge gap because we try to bring all of our buildings along in the process. **District Representative**

The following section offers preliminary assessment of the extent and type of impact that the RF program in Indiana and RF schools in Indiana have in schools and grade levels around them that are not directly receiving RF funds.

Impact on Non- Reading First Schools

In on-line surveys and site visit and district representative interviews, stakeholders were asked to assess the impact of RF schools on non-RF schools and personnel. Below, data from on-line surveys is presented followed by site visit and district representative interviews.

On-line surveys

On-line surveys were completed by teachers, interventionists, coaches, and principals. Data on principal and coach assessment of impact on non-RF schools and personnel are presented in table 23 below. See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively, for copies of the coach, teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys.

Table 23. Stakeholder Assessment of Non-RF Impact

Impact on non-RF schools	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
Provides strong leadership	5%	13%	2%	16%	46%	18%	K-3 Teacher
	4%	5%	3%	11%	43%	35%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	2%	67%	31%	Principal

Impact on non-RF schools	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
	2%	9%	4%	9%	36%	40%	Coach
Non-RF public schools have been invited to RF PD activities	7%	0%	7%	7%	39%	41%	K-3 Teacher
	6%	12%	0%	14%	42%	26%	Interventionist
							Principal
							Coach
Non-RF public schools have participated in RF PD activities	9%	7%	7%	28%	30%	30%	K-3 Teacher
	6%	20%	4%	18%	40%	12%	Interventionist
	4%	10%	7%	28%	38%	12%	Principal
	0%	1%	11%	16%	60%	11%	Coach
Non-RF teachers in my district are using RF practices	0%	9%	7%	23%	39%	23%	K-3 Teacher
	10%	6%	4%	28%	35%	18%	Interventionist
	2%	8%	6%	25%	38%	21%	Principal
	0%	1%	8%	16%	51%	25%	Coach
Non-RF teachers in my school are using RF practices	0%	0%	4%	24%	47%	24%	K-3 Teacher
	4%	12%	8%	12%	39%	26%	Interventionist
	7%	0%	7%	7%	39%	41%	Principal
	6%	12%	0%	14%	42%	26%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- The majority of coaches and principals agree that non-RF schools have been invited to RF PD activities. Eighty percent of principals and 68% of coaches agree or strongly agree that non-RF schools have been invited to RF PD. These findings are similar to those of 2007-08
- More than half of principals and coaches agree or strongly agree that non-RF schools have participated in RF PD activities. As compared to 2006-07, a larger percentage of coaches agree that non-RF schools participated in RF PD and a larger percentage of principals strongly agree that non-RF schools have participated in RF PD activities
- At least half of all stakeholders agree or strongly agree that non-RF teachers in their district are using RF practices. Fifty percent of teachers and 53% of coaches agree or strongly agree that non-RF teachers in their district are using RF. This is a slight increase as compared to the results from 2006-07
- More than half of all stakeholders agree or strongly agree that non-RF teachers in their school are using RF. Fifty-nine percent of teachers and 65% of coaches agree

or strongly agree that non-RF teachers in their school are using RF. As compared to last year, each stakeholder group was more likely to report that non-RF teachers in their school are using RF practices

Site Visit and District Representative Interviews

During interviews and site visits stakeholders and district representatives gave their perceptions of the influence of RF schools on non-RF schools and upper elementary grades in RF schools. In general:

- **As compared to earlier year, extending shared literacy practice to whole schools and districts is a higher priority in 2007-08.** In previous years, few stakeholders discussed extending the RF model across whole schools and districts. In 2006-07, many teachers and coaches mentioned sharing thoughts on RF practice with non-RF teachers and in 2007-08 more teachers in the upper grades and non-reading first schools are beginning to participate in RF related PD and are slowly incorporating changes into their classrooms.
- **Non-RF schools and upper grade teachers in RF schools have begun to use DIBELS and a 90 minute block.** Many stakeholders reported that fourth and fifth grade teachers in their RF schools are using DIBELS, a 60 to 90 minute block and are interested in understanding more. In most cases, stakeholders note that utilization of DIBELS findings and fidelity to SBRR practice are less than in K-3 RF classrooms. Additionally, stakeholders report that in some districts non-RF schools are also administering and using DIBELS and implementing the 90 minute reading block.
- **Non-RF schools take advantage of RF professional development activities.** Stakeholders report that they extend PD to non-RF schools to the extent possible and allowable. Examples of activities include: Voyager trainings, book studies, and sessions by local and outsider speakers. At least one district has had non-public school staff participate in the year long Voyager training.
- **Stakeholders report that upper grade teachers participate in RF centered staff development.** Teachers of upper grades attend staff meetings where RF is discussed. Stakeholders report that fourth and fifth grade teachers are aware of the Big 5 components of reading and assessments such as DIBELS.
- **Funding, PD, and accountability are key issues in duplicating RF in upper grades.** Schools reported that it is difficult to implement RF in upper grades because there is no funding for RF materials, certified interventionists, coaching, databases, or assessment tools such as booklets and palm-pilots. Additionally, stakeholders note that without the intensive PD and accountability of RF, adoption of RF practice will be slower and less consistent.

Sustainability

The success that I've seen personally, I want to see the model continue. I don't want to see any change. I don't want to go back to what we had in the past. I want it to be a non-authorized, or a non-formalized Reading First school. I want the same assessments. I want the same commitment. I want the same opportunities for our teachers for professional development to help our students, and I challenged our School Board to provide, if nothing else, the dollars to pay the salaries of our Coaches, and whatever materials and supplies they might need in the future. **Principal**

I really think one of our biggest challenges will be supporting our coaches. We will not, as a school corporation, have the funds to do that because we're facing some big financial cuts. I think that will be a tremendous lost. I'm concerned about the assessment piece too. That's \$12.50/student. I don't know that we're going to have the money to support that, so lots of pieces of the Reading First that definitely we're going to struggle with. We've been thinking of some ways to sustain as much as we can but it's not going to be the same. **District Representative**

I'm concerned about change in administration as the leadership that is currently here might move on. That concerns me that the focus might shift or might wane or might get watered down. But I think as long as the people that are here continue to stay here, I think that this will definitely remain a focus and its sustainability will be a goal, even without the money, without the funds. **Principal**

A critical component in the success of the RF initiative is sustainability. Stakeholders were asked to assess their preparedness for sustainability. Data from their responses will be presented from online surveys, district representative surveys, and site visits.

On-line Surveys

Table 24 below contains information relating to the perception of sustainability for principals, coaches, teachers, and interventionists. For copies of the coach, teacher, interventionist, and principal surveys See Appendix A, B, C, and D, respectively.

Table 24. Stakeholder Perception of Sustainability

Perception of Sustainability	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Barely Disagree	Barely Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Stakeholder
On track to sustainability	0%	1%	0%	7%	55%	38%	K-3 Teacher
	1%	0%	0%	5%	53%	41%	Interventionist
	0%	0%	0%	9%	47%	44%	Principal
	0%	2%	6%	9%	59%	24%	Coach

Percentages are based on the total number of returned surveys and are rounded up or down for presentation ease; therefore, totals may not equal 100%

Insights from these data include:

- The vast majority of stakeholders believe that their schools are on track to sustainability; at least 80% of all stakeholders agree or strongly agree that they are on track to sustainability.
- Principals are most likely to indicate that they strongly agree that their school is on track to sustain the changes RF has put into place, whereas coaches are the least likely to agree or strongly agree that their school is on track to sustainability. These findings echo the results from the 2006-07 surveys.

Site Visit and District Representative Interviews

The optimism expressed in on-line surveys was not necessarily reinforced in site visit and other interviews. Many are finding success working within their schools and districts to secure support and funding for critical aspects of RF practice. However, many worry about the ability to maintain fidelity when resources and outside enforcement of accountability end. In general:

- **Teachers state that they will maintain their current practice in their classroom.** Many teachers interviewed concerning sustainability were very positive and optimistic about their continued use of Reading First practices. Many stakeholders reported that because teachers have been trained in SBRR methods for multiple years, their knowledge and skills would continue to be utilized to benefit the classrooms.
- **Stakeholders report that the maintenance of a reading coach is the most critical component for sustainability.** All stakeholders seem to recognize the central importance of a coach for sustainability. Many worry about the inability to continue to fund the reading coach and hope that financial support is available to maintain such a position.
- **Another area of agreement is the necessity of continued professional development.** Quality professional development is expensive, and there is concern that without RF funds the level and quality of training would be diminished. Stakeholders agreed that continued professional development for RF veterans as well as training for new and transferring teachers is critical. In fact, many enjoy the various professional development opportunities as they recognize that they are more focused and aligned with school and district goals. Few schools reported confidence in their ability to continue PD at the current level to stay up to date with cutting edge practices.
- **Stakeholders are concerned about their ability to sustain Reading First practices without the necessary funding.** Many believe that when funding ends, many practices will be modified, or even eliminated. Most schools predict that the 90 minute reading block will be modified. It is recognized that such support to maintain these practices will be reduced. There is a fear that the focus will not only shift, but may even change.

- **Stakeholders worry that sustaining materials and personnel for interventions and assessment will be difficult without RF funding.** Most schools reported concern for obtaining funding for interventionists and consumable intervention materials. Additionally, few schools reported they would be able to sustain using DIBELS electronically; however there exists a concern that the high quality materials that are essential for practice will be reduced or eliminated. Additional training is necessary to continue to use assessment to guide instruction as it is reported that even though almost all schools use assessment to guide instruction, many have difficulty truly understanding assessment and using assessment effectively to drive instruction.
- **All schools reported support from district and school level administrators as a crucial factor for sustainability.** Stakeholders noted the importance of accountability in maintaining fidelity to literacy instruction. In some districts superintendents have set expectations for the implementation of a RF-like model; in others, stakeholders feel that they are working against the perception that RF is incompatible with subjects other than reading as well as for students identified as gifted and talented.
- **Staff buy-in was also mentioned as necessary for sustainability.** While most cohort 1 stakeholders reported that teachers and administrators have bought into the RF, they noted that continued buy-in and growth in buy-in in cohort 3 schools is necessary for success. Similarly, continued buy-in from new teachers will be necessary for sustaining Reading First practices.

Appendices

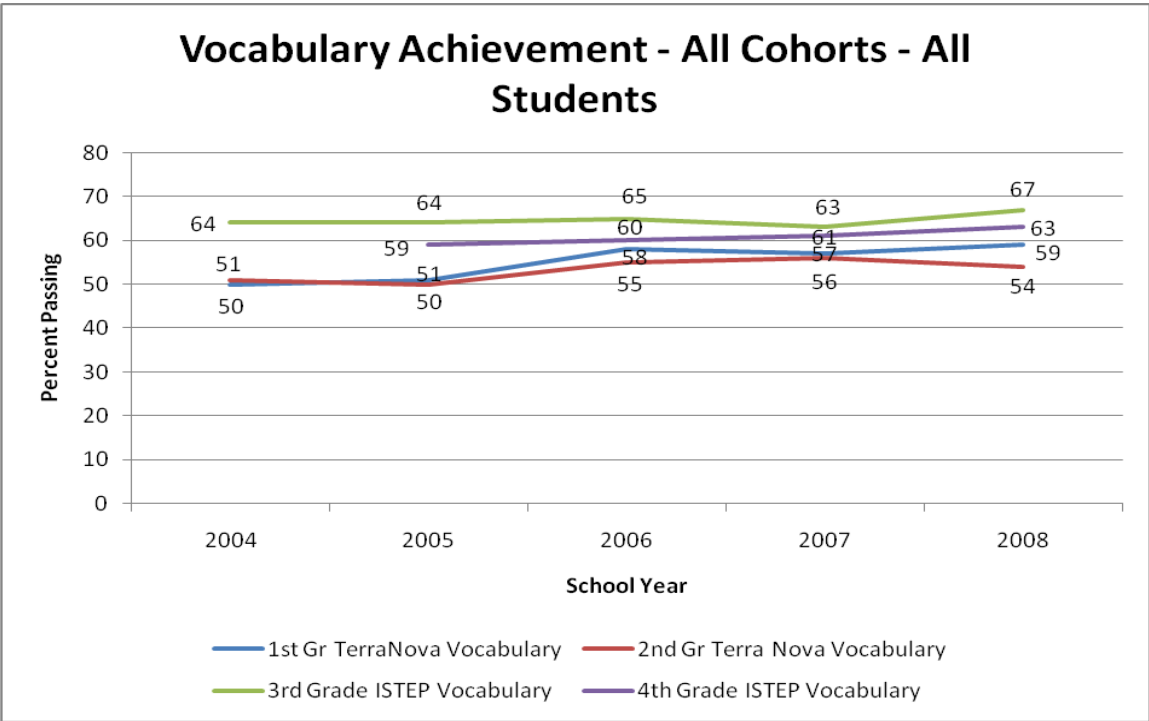
Appendix A – Coach Survey

Appendix B – Principal Survey

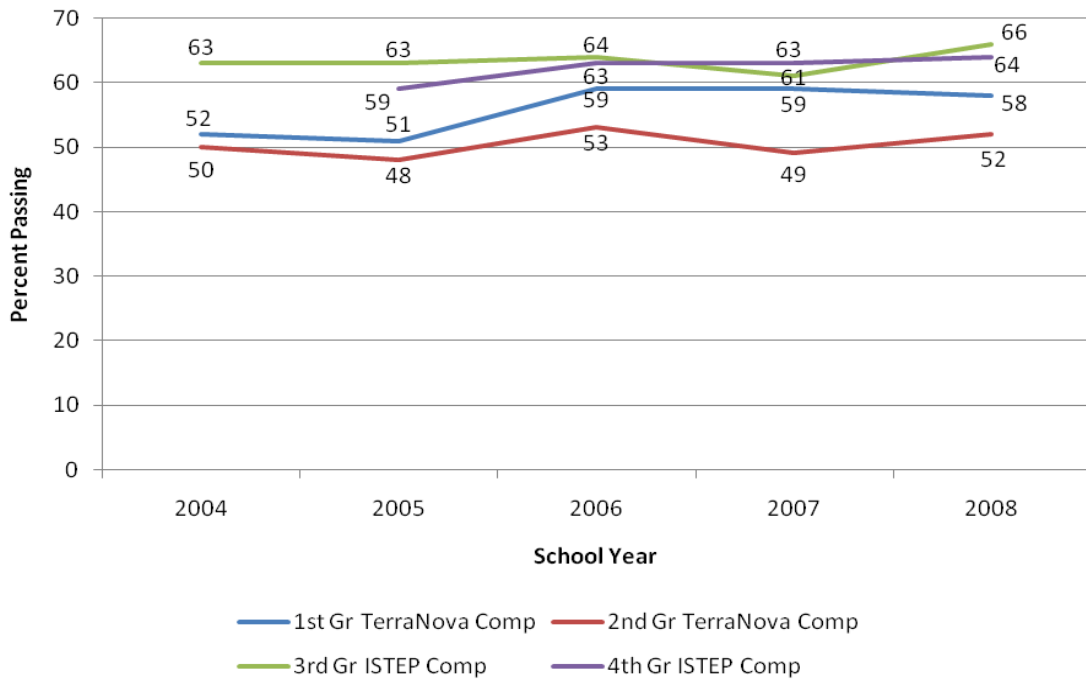
Appendix C – Teacher Survey

Appendix D – Interventionist Survey

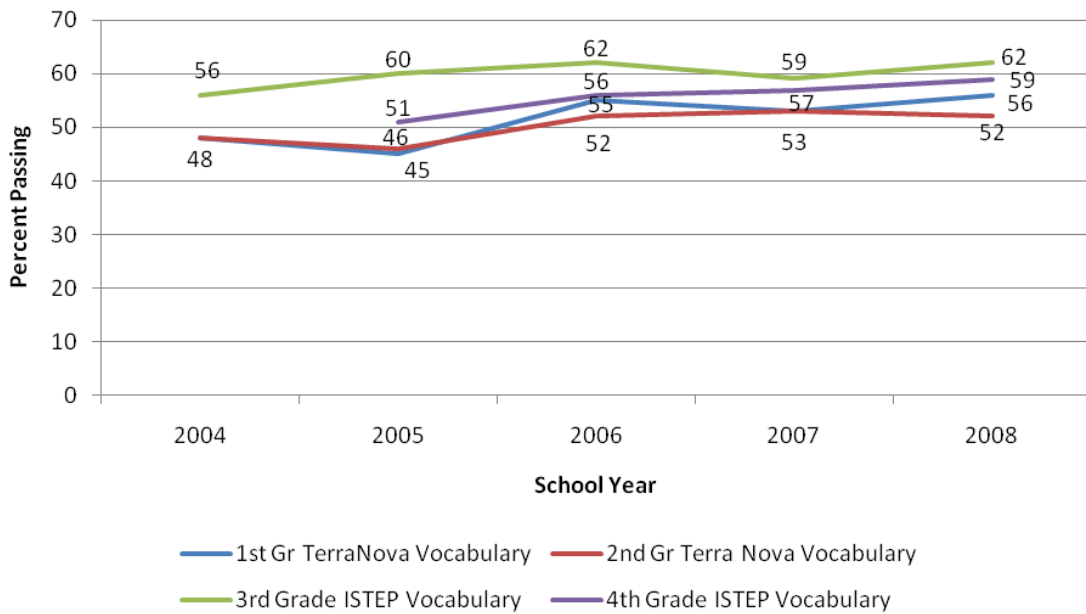
Appendix E – Additional Achievement Graphs by Student Subgroup



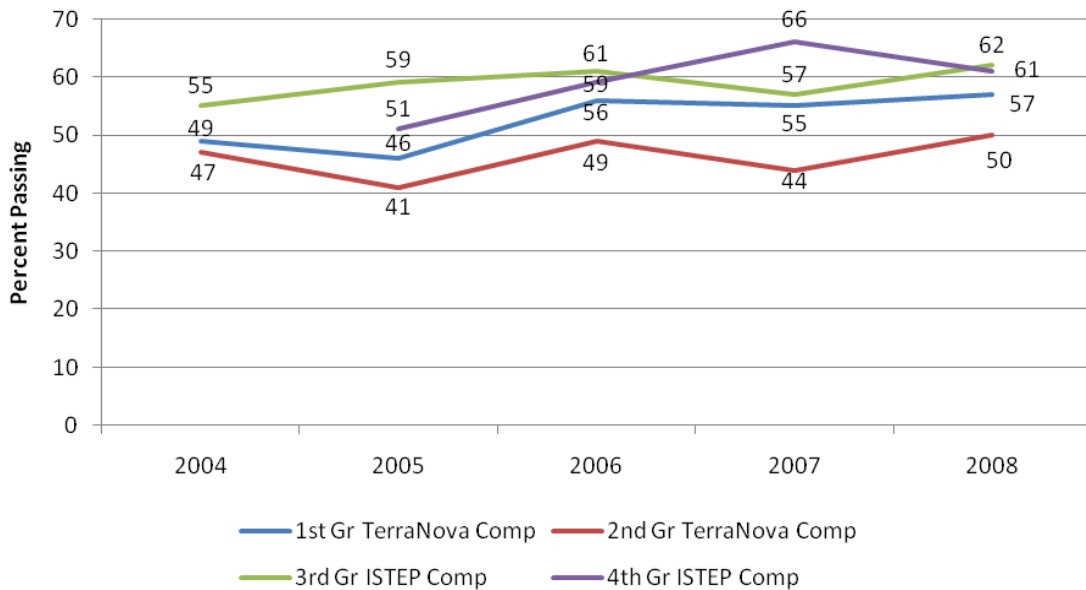
Comprehension Achievement - All Cohorts - All Students



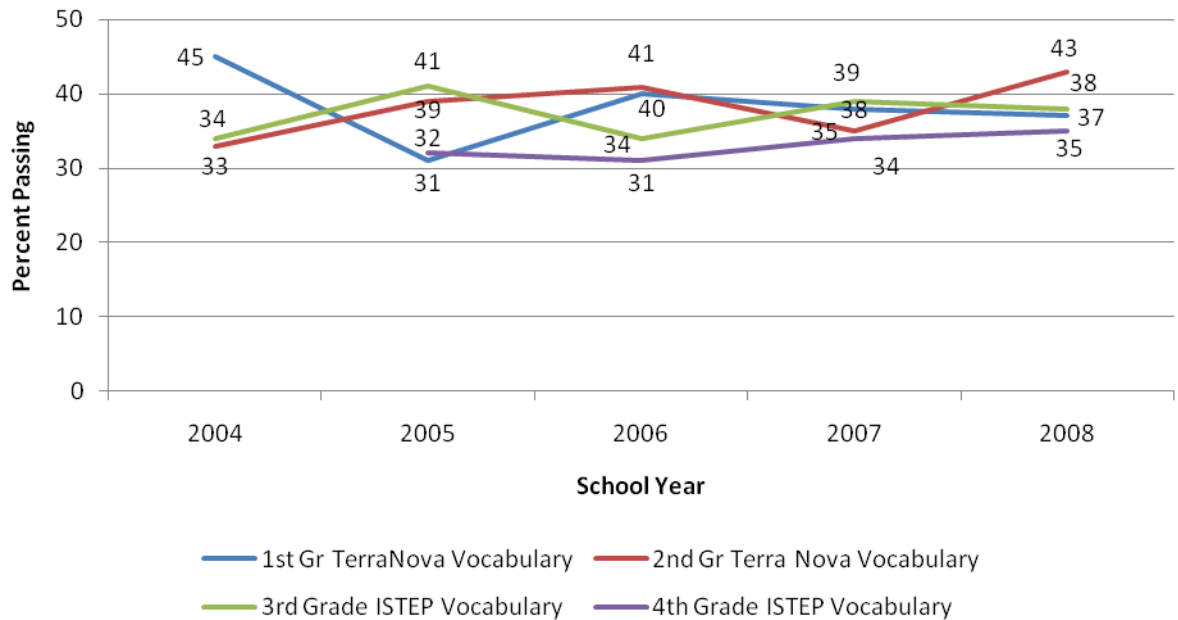
Vocabulary Achievement - All Cohorts - Economically Disadvantaged Students

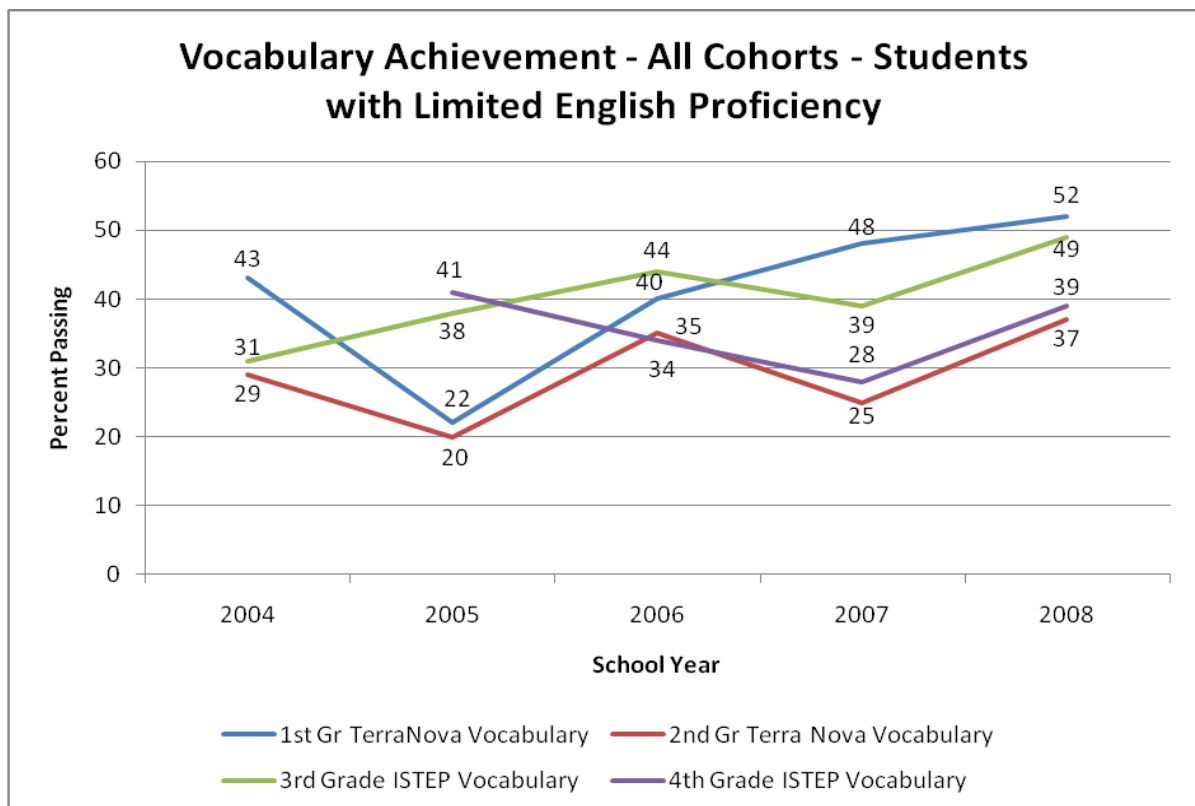
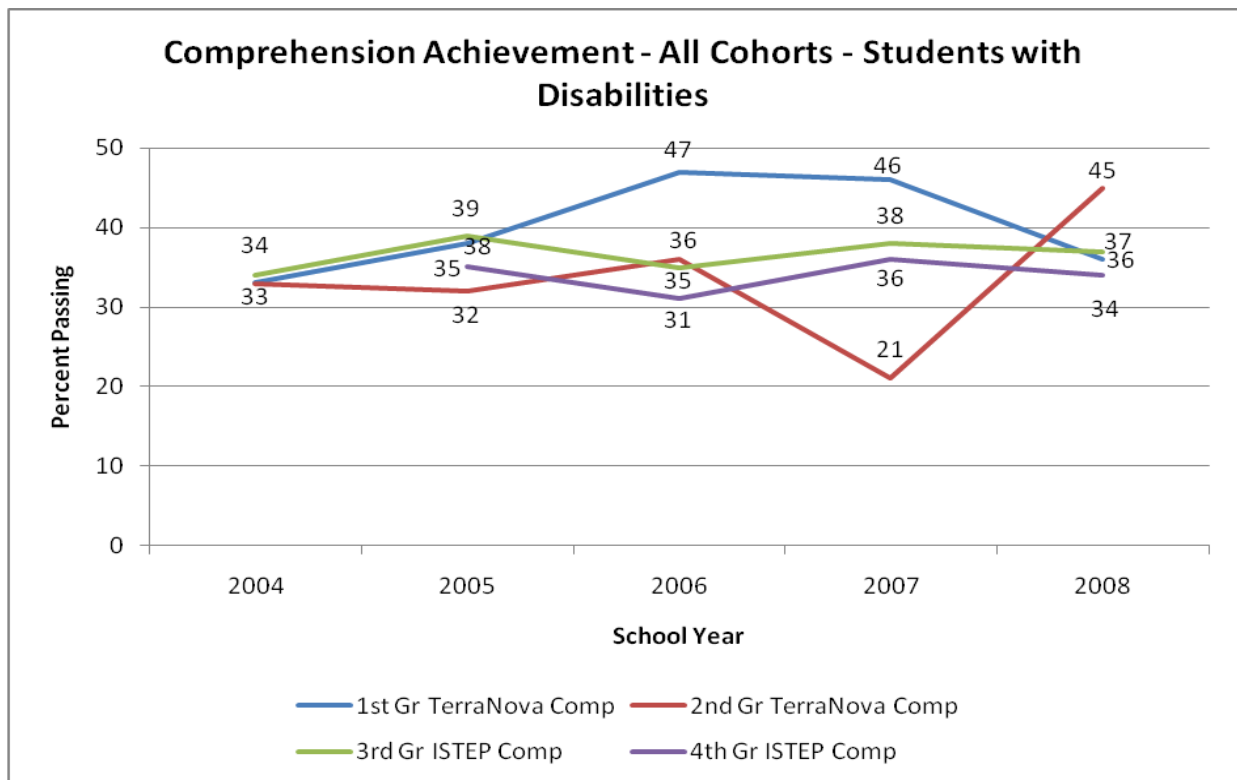


Comprehension Achievement - All Cohorts - Economically Disadvantaged Students

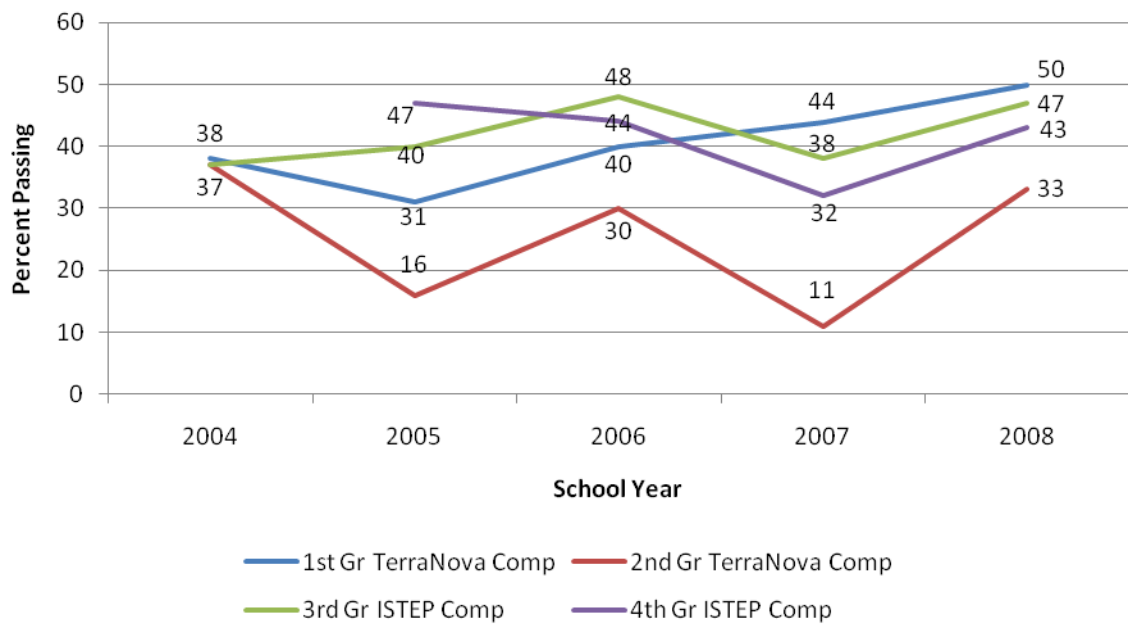


Vocabulary Achievement - All Cohorts - Students with Disabilities

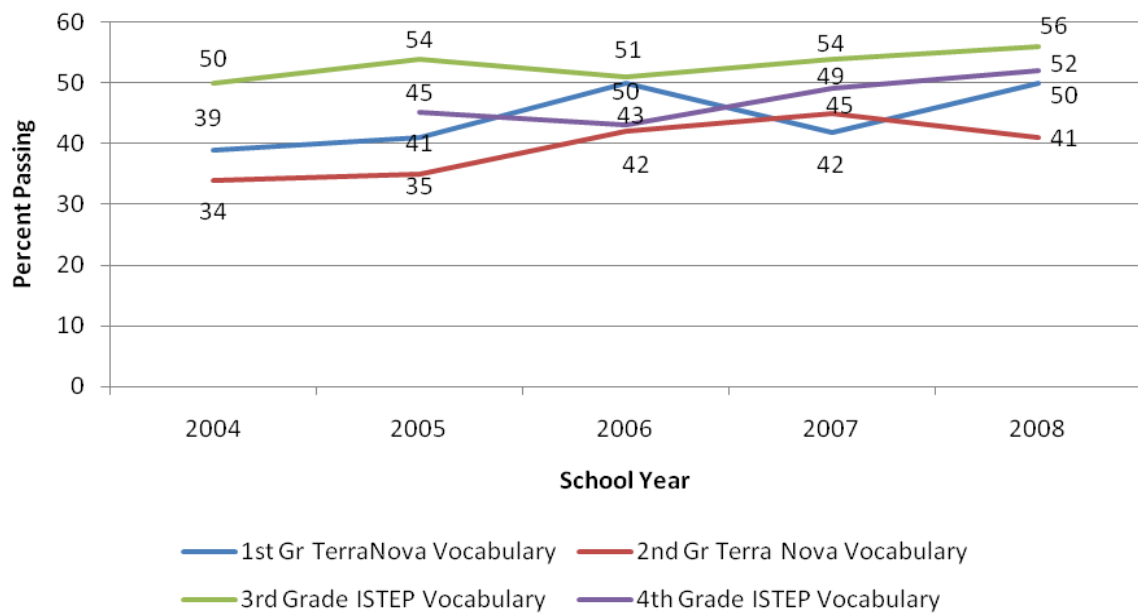




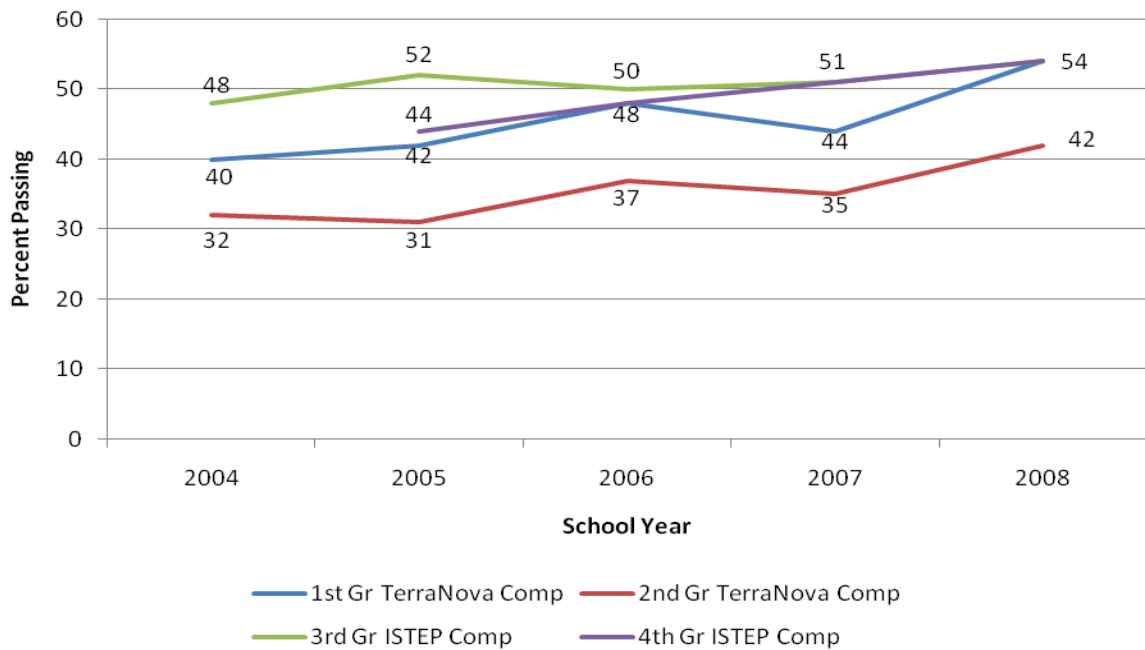
Comprehension Achievement - All Cohorts - Students with Limited English Proficiency



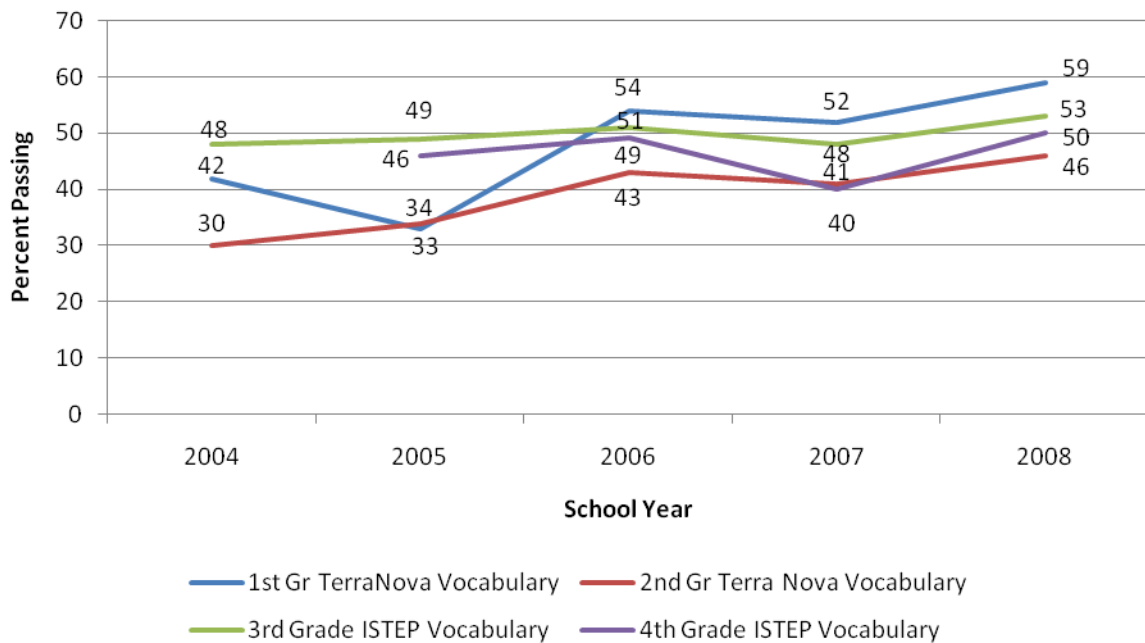
Vocabulary Achievement - All Cohorts - African American Students



Comprehension Achievement - All Cohorts - African American Students



Vocabulary Achievement - All Cohorts - Hispanic Students



Comprehension Achievement - All Cohorts - Hispanic Students

